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Fortean Times

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HISTORICAL ISSUE!

There ia a strongly historical flavour to this issue. 1987 sees the 900th anniversary of the accession of William Rufus, son of William the Conqueror), so **Mike Dash** examins the basis for the widely-held notion that this pagan king of England was sacrificially killed n the New Forest in 1100. **John Nicholson** and **C. Demont** assess the work of the 17th century pioneer of psychic research, Joseph Glanvil (it being the 350th anniversary of his birth), unto which we have added a few related items of interest. **Bob Skinner** reveals some historically recent cases of people with images in their corneas, etc. From antiquity, a puzzling case of mysterious fireballs at the Temple of Soloman is stoked up by **Steve Moore**. Early 19th century Japan is the setting for a mysterious visitation presented to us by **Masaru Mori**. And continuing his study of geriatric forteana, **Paul Sieveking** offers us the hope of bodily renewal for the over 120s. Almost the only offering in this issue which isn't backward-looking is the exciting yeti photograph by Tony Wooldridge. We've had to make it 80 pages this time, and we still couldn't put in all we wanted!

NEW COLUMNISTS

Also this issue we welcome two new columnists whom we hope will become regular contributors. Mark Chorvinski is a professional magician and film-maker who lives in Maryland, and he will be uniting these interests in his writing for us. Michael Shoemaker's forte is to reinvestigate some of the more intriguing but less-well-known fortean mysteries.

ADDRESS MUDDLES

A lot of people got muddled over address after last issue - **Fortean Times, Fortean Tomes** and **Fortean Book Service** are separate organisations, with separate bank accounts and separate addresses. The only publications obtainable from **Fortean Times** are back copies of the magazine, the occasional papers, and *Puzzling Questions*. The three addresses are: ★ **Fortean Times:** 96 Mansfield Road, London NW3 2HX ★ **Fortean Tomes:** 1 Shoebury Road, East Ham, London E6 2AQ ★ **Fortean Book Service:** 96 Meddon Street, Bideford, Devon, EX39 2EW. Please make sure you address your correspondence where it is intended.

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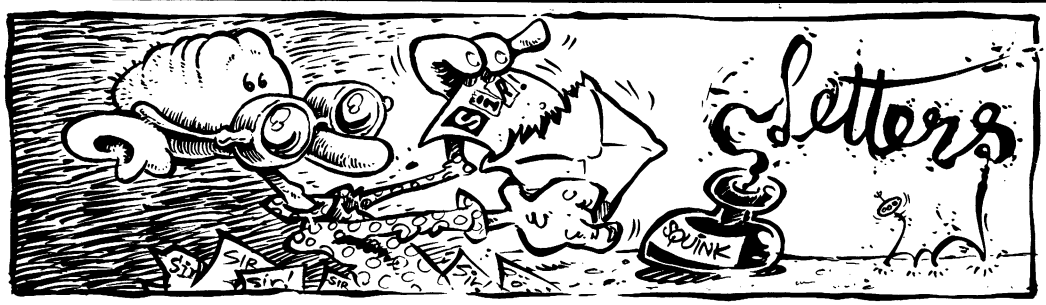
Letters



NEPTUNE'S MYSTERY SUBS

While the real nature of the 'Cottingley fairy' photographs [**FT43** p48] is now apparent, surely the fortean reaction will be that they are only *relative* fakes. For, in the spectrum of bogus-genuine, there must somewhere (in this or another world) exist photographs of *real* fairies. *[Frances Griffiths, one of the two 'Cottlingley' girls died recently, see FIVE TRANSITIONS on p22 - Ed.]*

I also note, with interest, the reports of missing shipping in **FT42** and **FT43**. The Kiribati disappearances remind me of the strange *Joyita* tragedy of late 1955 *[mentioned in 'Bermuda Triangle' and other books on disappearances - Ed.]* I recently looked at newspaper microfilm (Sydney *Morning Herald*) of the period, and it appears that unidentified submarines were observed subsequently near Fiji (*SMH* 4 Feb 1956). Apparently there was a phantom sub flap that month in the western Pacific, because a task force of six 'anti-submarine' ships was announced by the Australian Navy Minister (*SMH* 19 Feb 1956). According to this report, he would not - more likely could not - reveal the nationality of the subs.

Interestingly, that same month of 1956 also brought further unidentified sub reports from British and US warships on a SEATO exercise in the South China Sea (*SMH* 17 Feb 1956), and the Royal Navy detected another phantom in the Mediterranean (*SMH* 8 Feb 1956). I do not believe the mystery subs of 1956 were Russian, any more than the perennial submarine phantoms of Scandinavian waters are Russian - or of any *visible* Earthly nation.

Vallee's *Passport to Magonia* alerted us to the "updating process" historically visible in the machinations of otherworldly denizens. If the 'Sky Gods' have updated to a technological format, then why not **Neptune** and his cronies?

Remember that, next time you come across a report of a mysterious submersible that is huge, dark, featureless, unmarked, and tracked at 200km/hr!

Peter A. Kels
Springbrook, Queensland.

[For a recent sighting in the same area, see HOT AIR *on p22.]*

ELEPHANT UPDATE

In his article 'Elephants' (**FT47** p40), Paul Sieveking discusses the 'man-eating' propensities of this pachyderm, and says there is an *authentic* record of an Asiatic bull killing and eating a woman at Berlin Zoo during the Second World War. According to his source (the Zoo Vet David Taylor), a woman office worker had befriended the animal and used to feed it sandwiches during her lunch break. When the elephant fell ill, she persuaded the Zoo Authorites to let her stay in the elephant's stall overnight and nurse her 'friend' (sic). The next morning only parts of her remained!

The true account of this tragedy, however, is totally different. On the night of 1st November 1944 a mentally-ill woman climbed through a small window in the elephant stall at *Zurich Zoo* and was promptly crushed to death by the alarmed animal. 'Chang', as he was called, then proceeded to tear the body into small pieces and the following morning members of the Zurich City Police found the remains of the suicide scattered around the stall. *None of the flesh had been eaten.*

In reality, elephants are strictly vegetarian and will not eat meat in any shape or form. Sometimes, however, they will pick up and chew dismembered limbs of victims, and this has led to claims that they are carnivorous.

Gerald L.Wood, F.Z.S.
(Author of *The Guinness Book* of Animal Facts & Feats)

[We have received another clipping from The Daily Mirror *(14 Mar 1986) which asserts that the Taylor story is true, and names the woman concerned as Bertha Walt. Taylor is quoted as saying that it is well established that, in the absence of certain minerals in their diets, herbivores will eat the strangest things. In certain parts of Africa, for instance, where grazing is poor, mineral-deficient local cattle have been known to eat the bones of other cattle. Hippos, too, have varied their diet in such circumstances. I have no specialist knowledge of the matter - I just report what it says here. - PS.]*

BVM &UFO

The case of the Spanish BVM visionary Amparo Cuevas [**FT47** p36] provides a nice example of the need for the comparative approach of which FT is so uniquely an exponent. In 1982 she - for Amparo is a Senora, not a Senor - was told by the Virgin, *inter alia*, that "the celestial ships are already prepared which will carry the chosen ones to the promised land. They come surrounded by blue light". To her

Cont. on p78.

PEEKS AT THE PYRAMIDS

A series of discoveries promise a hot time at the old tomb soon. In May 1986, two French architects - Gilles Dormion and Jean-Patrice Goidin, of the Geophysical Prospecting Company (GPC) - using sounding device, called a microgravimeter, located three cavities behind the nine-foot-thick walls of the gallery leading to the so-called 'Queen's Chamber' in the Great Pyramid of Cheops. The excitement among Egyptologists is understandably high, although their expectations differ. Some hoped for intact treasure chambers; others would be content if the sand-filled cavities were some part of the complicated relieving or balancing systems, which could reveal a little more about the construction of the Pyramid. Only the imprudent dared dream of a fabulous chamber, untouched by robbers, containing perhaps the unfound mummy of Cheops himself.

A general survey of the Pyramid also indicated that it had insufficient mass, or rather stone blocks, than its seemingly solid structure implied, which strongly suggested more chambers existed than have so far been discovered. Dr Farouk El-Kadi, an engineering professor working for the Egyptian Antiquities Organisation (EAO), said: "We're missing one-fifth of our pyramid, and we must find it." It was impossible to say, at this stage, whether this difference - between 15-20% of the structure, according to Dr Ahmed Kadry, the head of EAO - was distributed over a large number of small 'relieving' chambers, or a small number of large storage chambers, passages, or some combination of these.

Dr Kadry discussed a plan with another French team, led by Jacques Montlucon - from the French Electric Company, who financed the venture - to drill several 1½-inch diameter holes through the walls of the 'Queen's Chamber', made of over 9ft-thick limestone slabs, using a special technique which seals the hole, and preserves the core for replacing in the hole afterwards. But it was not without opposition. The loudest criticism came from a well-known archaeologist, engineer and Egyptologist, Dr Kamal El-Mallakh, who was angry that the Pyramid was being tampered with by people he regards as "amateur experimenters of the worst kind". Ahmed Moussa, director of the EAO pyramids office, said: "I for one think there's nothing there, nothing lrft in the Pyramid except what is already known. But what if there is? The walls of the Pyramid are themselves antiquities. Will we really break through and destroy them if there is something inside? It is a problem, a very big problem." Dr Kadry himself would not speculate beyond supposing that the cavities might be abandoned workings, reminding us that the builders of the chamber had changed their plans for it at least twice during its construction. Nevertheless, he authorised the drilling, which was carried out in the first week of September 1986.

The results were immediately unexpected. The first hole took three days to drill and the others were spaced eight feet apart. The blocks turned out to be 6½ feet-thick (2m), on the other side of which was sand. Not ordinary desert sand, but, as a laboratory study discovered, sand imported from another part of Egypt which had been sifted and "mineral-enriched". Also discovered were alternate layers of mortar and sand. Dr Kadry is quoted as saying: "We've learned more after these 10 intense days of drilling than in all the projects before." At the same time - or shortly after, it's hard to tell - a team of hi-tech archeologists from Tokyo's Waseda University, also began work, and their results are said to have confirmed the French findings. The French were planning to put endoscopic-type cameras, linked to video-monitors, down the holes, which the Japanese also hoped to do, but no word of cameras peering into cavities. For Dr Kadry, the risk was justified: "We are now sure that there are cavities still intact... which proves they have not been opened since the pyramid was built..."

According to a Reuters report, the Japanese discovered a new void (the fourth?) behind the walls of the 'Queen's Chamber'. They also found a previously unknown passage, filled with sand.

which begins 138ft from the Cheops Pyramid and runs towards and below it. "We discovered it by chance," said team-leader Sakuji Yoshimura. Naturally thoughts of secret entrances are in the air. Jean-Patrice Goidin, who had joined the drilling team, said he hoped to find a secret door to the chamber behind the wall, and that he thought it could be no more than 30 inches square. "We prefer to enter by the door," he said. "It's a matter of elegance." With understandable emotion, Dr Kadry beileves these discoveries are "the threshold of a new archeological revolution."

The latest report we have is that the Japanese gournd-scanning radar also detected signs of artifacts in a a 'boat-pit', the last one of five pits 18.5 metres from the Pyramids southern face. Three of these pits have been found empty. The fourth, when cracked open in 1954, contained a dismantled royal ship 43.4 metres long, which quickly disintegrated necessitating 30 years of reconstruction. Ancient Egypt's sun cult requires two boats: one to navigate the daytime horizon, and another for travel to the underworld of the night - so it is hoped that the fifth, undisturbed pit, contains the hypothetical second boat. An American-Egyptian team, funded by the National Geographic Society, plans to use NASA lunar sampling technology. Sealed holes will be drilled through the pit roof - 41 massive slabs of limestone, which was sealed originally by pouring liquid gypsum plaster over the blocks - and samples of the 4,600-year-old air will be sucked into special bottles. Then endoscopic cameras will take digitised video pictures of the chamber before it is sealed up again intact. In this way, the 1954 disaster with the ship, will not be avoided. The preparation is underway for the big operation to begin this autumn.

Perhaps we should have headed this piece 'Bonanza!', because yet another team - from the University of Berkeley, California, this time - have been mapping the Valley of Kings, across the Nile from Giza, using infrared scanners from hot-air balloons. So far this year (1987) they have rediscovered two tombs (which had been ransacked and then lost beneath the sand in the last 100 years), including one thought to have been constructed for the many sons of Ramses II found near a bus-park. Other similarly 'lost' tombs are being looked for.

The nearby Valley of Queens was subjected to traverses of the French 'Pyramid' team's micro-gravimeter in the first two months of 1987, in another project funded by the French electric company (EDF). Jacques Montlucon and Dr Kadry issued a statement announcing the discovery of a considerable "anomaly", "comparable with that created by known tombs". However, further analysis of 600 survey points was needed to pinpoint the hidden tomb.

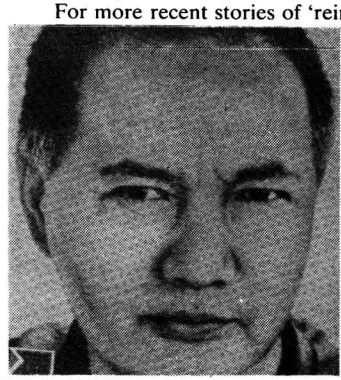
SOURCES: there were many, but these were the main ones: *Int.Herald Tribune* 1 Sept; AP reports of 4th &7th Sept; [AP] Houston (TX) *Chronicle*; *The Independent* 29 Oct; Wolverhampton *Express & Star* 22 Nov 1986. [UPI] Little Rock (AR) *Arkansas Gazette* 1 Feb; [R] *Arab News* 11 Feb; *Saudi Gazette* 26 Feb, 4 + 6 March 1987.

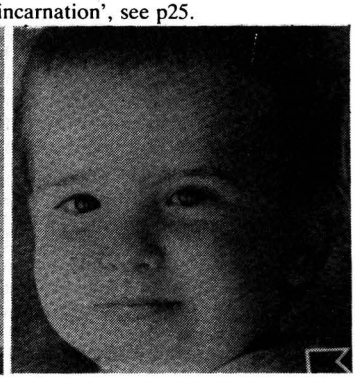
LAMA REINCARNATES IN SPAIN

A Spanish boy, aged about two years, has become the first officially recognized "absolute and irrefutable" incarnation of a Tibetan religious leader in a Western child. Last year, an envoy of the Dalai Lama was despatched to the West to examin whether Osel - fifth child of peasant parents in the village of Bubion, near Granada in Spain's Sierra Nevada Mountains - was the reincarnation of Lama Yeshe, (below **left**), former head of the Kopan monastery in Nepal, who died in 1984. In late Autumn 1986, Osel (below **right**) - whose name means 'Pure Light' in Tibetan - was taken to Katmandu, accompanied by his mother, and underwent a series of elaborate tests, unerringly identifying the Lama Yeshe's possessions. According to one report, the identity parade was in Dharmsala before the Dalai Lama himself, and included nine other candidates The Dalai Lama declared: "This is him." *D.Telegraph* 13 Oct 1986; *D.Mail* 14 Oct; *The Independent* 4 Nov ; *Arab News* 10 Feb 1987.

The account in *Weekly World News* 3 Feb 1987 - not a reliable source - says that the first time the parents noticed unusual behaviour in Osel was when he stopped playing while a film about the Dalai Lama was showing on TV, and sat with "his hands clasped as if in prayer". Later they took Osel to a Buddhist retreat, near Ibiza, attended by an old man who had been a friend and disciple of Yeshe. The old man cried out in amazement when the baby crawled towards him, and told the parents that he had had a vision of Lama Yeshe one night, in which he was shown a baby crawling and told to take care of it because "My spirit is in him." When the boy is older, his proud parents say he will be sent to a monastery in India for his training as a lama. None of our sources agree on the family name, giving, variously, as Garcia, Torres and Hita, Ita and Iquierdo! *Newsweek* (23 March 1987) calls him Osel Hita Torres.

For more recent stories of 'reincarnation', see p25.





1986 WAS A REAL BLAST!

◀ **Exploding Chickens** - About 26,000 dead chickens buried in a 20ft pit, scattering pieces of putrid poultry all over Larry Mohler's chicken ranch in Sheridan, Oregon. They had died in vast numbers during a heat wave at the beginning of June 1986, and he needed a bulldozer to dispose of them. 12 hours later "the dirt we piled on top of them started bubbling and moving" with the build-up of gases. Then it blew up. "We had a miniature St Helens," said Mohler. [UPI] Milwaukee (WI) *Journal*, Houston (TX) *Chronicle*, Pawtuxet Valley (RI) *Daily Times*, London *Eve.Standard* 5 June 1986.

◀ **Exploding Nappies** - well, exploded, actually - Two suspicious packages aboard a TWA plane necessitated an emergency landing and evacuation at Mid-Continent Airport, Wichita, Kansas. The packs were removed and blown-up before being recognized as soiled nappies. Houston (TX) *Chronicle* 21 July 1986.

◀ **Exploding Chairs** - The Furniture Industry Research Association at Stevenage, Herts, has been asked to prepare a report for the Health and Safety Executive after 11 accidents with gas-filled swivel chairs. Some 2 million of these office chairs are fitted with a nitrogen gas cylinder which operates the height control mechanism. Heavy use and abuse causes tiny metal fatigue cracks and bang! Collapse of stout office party. *Guardian* 11 Aug 1986.

◀ **Exploding Babies' Heads** - Not a punk group, but a typically restrained headline in the *Weekly World News* (19 Aug 1986). The story refers, in fact, to a curious malady developed by babies in four villages in the Indian state of Bihar. According to a Dr S.P. Sinha: "The babies are born apparently normal... but between four and 10 days after their birth their skulls suddenly split open and the unfortunate babies die instantly." 20 deaths are mentioned in the report, with no sign of identification of the "plague" or its source.

◀ **Exploding Toilet** - Yes, another one. Whilst going about his private business a man in a public lavatory in Cowley, Oxfordshire, had his skull fractured when the cistern blew off the wall above him. Police investigating the debris found two batteries. They believe it was intended "to be detonated by the first person to use the toilet." The rotten prankster might have given a chap time to pull his trousers up! *Guardian* 4 Nov 1986.

◀ **Exploding TVs** - The Russian paper *Izvestia* - cited by *The Independent* 14 Nov 1986 - carried a report about a woman whose Raduga TV set exploded as she watched, adding that she shouldn't have been surprised because "more than 400 exploded last year in Leningrad alone." The chief technician responsible for the Raduga wondered what all the fuss was about. Yes, he agreed, the Raduga sometimes catches fire, "but then so do other television sets such as Foton, Sadko and Rubin."

◀ **Exploding Preacher** - Another example of *WWN*'s self-control: "Preacher explodes into flames in the pulpit! He's burned to a crisp during fire-and-brimstone !" Just as evangelist Franz Lueger was warning his congregation that they were headed for Hell, "There was an electrical odour in the air... There was a bright flash from his chest and then he screamed and slumped forward," said elderly eye-witness Mrs Anne Braun. "It was then he literally exploded into a ball of fire. It was horrible." An inquest returned a verdict of death by fire "of Unknown cause and origin". The Bible he was holding was said to be unburned. Just when this occurred, or precisely where ("on the outskirts of Vienna") was, typically, not *WWN*'s concern. Nor does the report contain the names of any authorities or institutions through which we might obtain accurate information. We hope our continental readers can help us find out more about this case. *Weekly World News* 18 Nov 1986.

◀ **Exploding Cat** - Peppi, a cat adored and spoiled for eight years at Anmer Lodge old folks' home in Stanmore, London, went for his usual nap on a chair in the day lounge. "There was a terrific bang and a flash and he flew several feet into the air," said Mrs Irene McSweeney, the deputy. Some believed Peppi was enveloped in a "blue flame". Firemen, called to investigate, could find no obvious cause for the blast, and blamed "a build-up of static on the cat's fur". If that is so, we muse, why hadn't it happened before? *D.Telegraph, Sun* 28 Nov 1986.

◀ **Exploding Eggs** - In mid-January 1987, there were record low temperatures - it was so cold in Salzburg, Austria, that eggs were exploding as soon as chickens laid them. *New Scientist* 22 Jan 1987.

THE HOUSE OF BLOOD

Jean-Marc Belmer, a lorry driver aged 30, and his wife Lucie, 23, redecorated their new home at Saint Quentin in Picardy, France, in August 1985. The following January they noticed tiny red droplets all over the walls and carpet of the living room, which they cleaned off. At the beginning of February the droplets reappeared. That night, Jean-Marc left on a job at 3am and an hour later Lucie heard the sound of crashing crockery in the kitchen. Terrified that someone had broken in, she locked herself in the bedroom, but in the morning she found that nothing was broken or out of place. The following day the couple woke to find their pillows and the kitchen table dotted with tiny red stains. Though scared, they spent one more night in the house. In the morning, the stains were back all over the bed, and even on their pyjamas. The Belmers moved to Jean-Marc's parents house with their spaniel, Pataud, who had refused to enter the Saint Quentin house for several weeks. Forensic experts said the stains were dried blood, and were being analysed to see whether they were human or animal. *S.Express* 16 Feb 1986.

FIFTH FORCE

Baron Roland von Eotvos is a Hungarian physicist with a penchant for measuring the speed of falling suet. And grease. And tallow, snakewood, magnesium alloy, asbestos and more or less anything else he could lay hands on. It was his life's work and the results were finally published posthumously in 1922. The experiments were acclaimed as definitive proof that Galileo had been right in thinking all objects of whatever weight accelerate at a constant rate under the force of gravity.

Now scientists at the University of Washington, Seattle, have decided that both men were wrong. Ephraim Fischbach and his colleagues assert that heavy objects should fall slightly more slowly than light ones. Fischbach's theories grew from the results of two sets of experiments, one involving gravity tests in a mineshaft and the other a laboratory examination of sub-atomic particles. The two gave marginally different values for gravity, and the Seattle physicists speculate that the discrepancy can be explained by the existence of a 'fifth force' which they dub 'hypercharge' and which tends to oppose gravitational attraction and push things apart at short range - say 600 feet.

Hypercharge seems to be linked to the number of neutrons and protons an element contains - the greater that number, the greater the hypercharge and the slower an object would fall. So objects made from elements of high atomic weight would be most affected and an iron cannonball should fall more slowly than a feather. Because hypercharge - which is effectively a sort of anti-gravity, though 100 times weaker than gravity itself - has a short range it would be more easily observed in a laboratory than in the field. By analogy with other, known, forces such as electro-magnetism, it would be communicated by 'hyperphotons'. These should have mass and could go some way to accounting for the fabled 'missing matter' which astronomers hope to find in the cosmos somewhere [see HAPPY BIRTHDAY on p13].

By re-examining von Eotvos's results, Fischbach thinks he has found evidence to support his contention. Variations which the Hungarian had dismissed as insignificant 'scatter' turn out to be linked to the weights of the objects being tested. Far from being random, Fischbach claims, von Eotvos's 'errors' - which he attributed to such unlikely-sounding factors as the downdraft from a fly's wings as it passed the torsion balance being used - are highly ordered and probably the most significant part of his experiments. (As forteans we can't help feeling that the glib writing-off of unwanted results is equally important.)

Fischbach and his colleagues suggest that 'hypercharge' should join the four forces already known to man - gravity, electro-magnetism and the 'strong' and 'weak' nuclear forces. But there will be opposition to such a revolutionary proposal and some scientists are calling for von Eotvos's experiments to be repeated. We can't be sure of their accuracy, they claim, since no-one now alive knows the atomic weight of Hungarian suet.

[AP] Houston [TX] *Chronicle* 11 Jan; *New Scientist* 16 Jan; *Guardian* 17 Jan; *Time magazine* 20 Jan 1986.

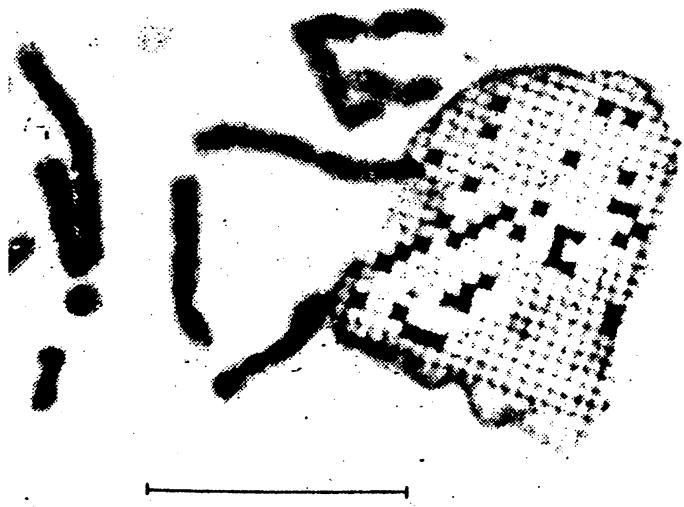
SCRABBLED GENES

The 25 Sept 1986 edition of *Nature* contained this intriguing letter and picture on p300. The letter, signed by seven members of the Department of Medical Genetics, at Churchill Hospital, Oxford, requested help in identifying the mystery object:

"Sir - The very tiny object shown **[below]**, *much like a fragmented crossword in appearance, was recently found in one of our routine chromosome preparations for prenatal diagnosis following amniocentesis. But what is it?*

Is it a man-made device? Packing text as binary coded information on the miniature scale (the scale bar is 10μm) would seem advantageous. Or is it a naturally occurring substance? None of the possibilities we have bee able to think of would seem to be appropriate for amniotic fluid... We are as intrigued as we are ignorant."

Our inquiry brought the following recent reply from John Wolstenholme, first signatory of the letter: "We have as yet received no satisfactory explanation, although we suspect it is man-made. We have no reason to believe that it in fact came from the amniotic fluid."If it was man-made, the question remains: what is it?



GIANT 'WALNUT' OVER ALASKA

One of the most interesting UFO cases in a long, dull time occurred on 17 November 1986, but did not come to light until a reporter solicited information from from the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The incident involved a Japan Air Lines cargo-carrying Boeing 747 - Flight1628 - in flight between Reykjavik and Tokyo.

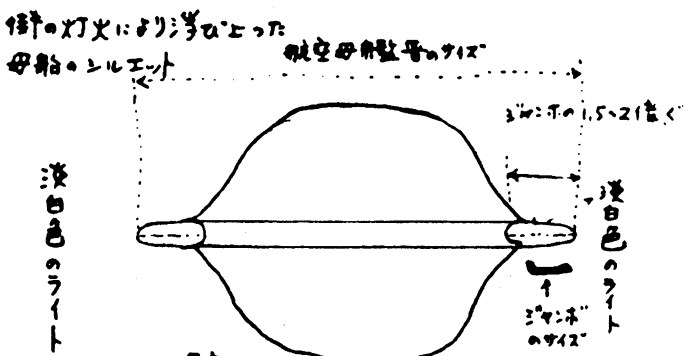
As the plane crossed the Arctic Circle, at 35,000ft, about 30 miles southeast of the Alaskan town of Fort Yukon, an unfamiliar arrangement of white and yellow blinking lights suddenly appeared about seven miles away - according to one FAA account, they were only one mile away. Although the three-man JAL crew "could not see the shape" of the object, "the lights indicated to them it may be a large aircraft or a large something," said FAA spokesman Paul Steucke. The crew radioed air-traffic control in Anchorage as the lights followed them "in formation" for about 50 miles. When the Boeing 747 landed at Anchorage, its crew were all interviewed by FAA security manager Jim Derry.

When they first reported the lights - at 6:19pm - controllers tried to locate the object on radar, said Steucke, but although they picked up the JAL plane, they "were unable to confirm a second target" with their equipment. At 6:26pm, the FAA asked the Military Regional Operations Control Center, at Elmendorf AFB, in Anchorage, for help. The USAF reported that they "saw a second target eight miles away from the JAL jet...but a minute later said they were no longer receiving any radar return (of a second object)," Steucke said. At 6:32pm, the JAL pilot - Capt. Kenju Terauchi - was given permission to descend to 31,000ft. He was asked if the lights were still there, and replied: "It is descending in formation." At 6:39pm, 20 minutes after the first report, they crew could no longer see the lights. At 6:45pm, controllers at Fairbanks authorized a manoeuvre so a United Airlines north-bound jet could view the JAL plane, but they saw nothing also.

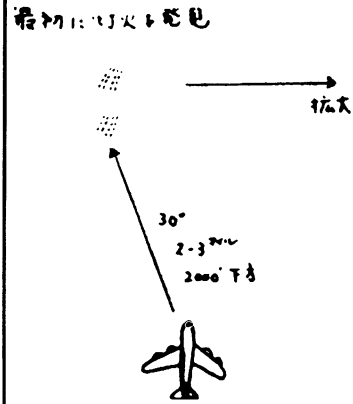
This story went out on the UPI newswires on 29th Dec, in time for the next day's papers. In the following days, more details emerged which take the incident even further beyond conventional understanding. Capt. Terauchi, described as a "veteran pilot" of 29 years' service, told reporters that the object they saw was so enormous it dwarfed his Boeing 747. Terauchi and his colleagues only glimpsed the silhouette of the unknown walnut-shaped UFO - see drawing - but was convinced it was "two times bigger than an aircraft carrier". The UPI reports for 1st Jan 1987 also say that Terauchi estimates that the giant UFO kept level with them for 400 miles - not the FAA's original statement of 50, unless one or both these figures are journalistic errors! - and that it was accompanied by two objects, smaller than the Boeing 747, which did not show up on their radar. These two UFOs flew "parallel and then suddenly approached very close." Terauchi expressed "amazement" that the 3 UFOs "disappeared, reappeared, moved quickly and stopped suddenly."

On 2nd January, the FAA spokesman admitted that they could not explain the origin of the flashing lights, adding unexpectedly: "We are not investigating because there is nothing to investigate." Several days later, and in the face of mounting worldwide interest, Steucke was having to backtrack, and announced the reopening of the FAA inquiry into the incident, "because it was a violation of airspace." Capt. Terauchi was re-interviewed; amber was added to the list of flashing lights, and that he had waited for about six minutes before making his first report. "I can't say I blame him for that," said Steucke. It was also revealed that Terauchi was ordered to turn his plane in a full circle to eliminate the possibility of a natural phenomenon, "which would have remained stationary." The lights stayed with the jet and even moved to its left side, vanishing eastward about 80 miles north of Anchorage.

By 9th January, a review of the radar tapes, transcriptions of radio conversations and other records of the flight was completed and the FAA concluded that the radar image was nothing more than a "split image" of Flight 1628 itself. No doubt the FAA were eminantly satisfied with such bare-faced sophistry! To begin with, the radar evidence was incomplete, by their own admission. In the 6 weeks that the FAA sat on the case some of the records were destroyed or, as the conspiricy-theorists would have it, went missing! The UPI report of 4th



Captain Terauchi made these drawings:. **Above:** showing his 747 dwarfed by the huge "walnut-shaped" UFO. **Top right:** showing how the formation of lights moved in relation to his plane.



January, has Steucke saying that the USAF "no longer had a record of its radar from that night."

We were not surprised to learn - according to our last source - that it was one of the disgruntled crew who leaked the astonishing encounter to the press originally, hoping to break the FAA silence. Perhaps, in ignoring the visual experience of the crewmen, the FAA exacted their terrible revenge!

This story was so well and widely reported that we cannot list all our sources here - mainly UPI reports between 10 Dec 1986 and 5 Jan 1987 - but they are all on file.

After we wrote-up the story, we received further news that Captain Terauchi and his co-pilot had a **second** encounter with a UFO while comming into Anchorage on 11 January this year (1987). Once again it fell to Steucke to hold a press conference. "We asked him point-blank if this was like the Nov. 17th sighting," said Steucke about his interrogation of Terauchi. "'No, no, there's no similarity between the two,' he said." Terauchi said they saw the lights three times, for a total of about 50 minutes, at 37,000ft, and that they approached his cargo plane, went beneath it and reappeared behind. His comment at the time to the traffic controller was "Irregular lights, looks like a spaceship." Steucke said this was not confirmed by military or civil radar, and speculated that the pilots had seen light "bouncing off ice crystals in the atmosphere." [AP reports of 12 & 13 Jan 1987].

TURIN SHROUD TO BE TESTED

Pope John Paul II has at long last approved a plan for a new series of tests upon fragments of the image-bearing cloth held at Turin cathedral, which a great many believe to be imprinted by the crucified body of Jesus Christ. In the absence of any definitive testing to put a date to the cloth, its antiquity could only be debated in the light of historical detective work and the opinions of skeptics and believers. Although carbon 14 dating techniques have been around a long time, the Vatican - to whom it was left by the late ex-King Umberto of Italy - had previously opposed the tests because they entailed removing at least one small piece of the fragile cloth to be destroyed during the search for its radio-carbon content.

The tests will be carried out in seven different laboratiories, said Prof. Carlos Chagas, the president of the Vatican's Pontifical Academy of Sciences in an interview on Vatican Radio. Three further institutions would be involved in statistical analysis of the results - and the Pope has ordered the conclusions to be published in time for Easter 1988. It seems that one of the tests will be conducted at the Research Laboratory for Archæology and Art at Oxford University, where Prof. Edward Hall said his team would be examining fibres "for radio-active elements deposited by rays from outer-space," (or so he was reported). Prof. Hall revealed that the tests were due tobegin last year, but were stopped at the last minute by the Bishop of Turin.

Proponents of the tests are hoping to establish that the cloth and its blood-stains are from Christ's time and not a Medieval or Middle Ages forgery. Opponents say that the carbon 14 test is not exact enough to establish an age within 150 years, and that the results will not be worth the damage to a Holy Relic. In any case, the proposed tests will not necessarily be helpful in resolving the problem of whether the image was painted [see **FT47** p10] or the product of natural processes. And how - now that we come to think of it - will Prof. Hall be able to distinguish between the radiation which some theorists (like Ian Wilson) believe *scorched* an image into the cloth and the radiation from "outer-space"? We await Easter 1988 with interest. Sources: *D.Telegraph* 23 July +6 Oct; *Times, Int.Herald Tribune* 6 Oct 1986.

TWO UNEARTHED ENIGMAS

▲ Archæologists, at an ancient burial site , hundreds of feet down, near New Delhi, India, were shocked to discover a Coca-Cola bottle amid 10,000 year-old bones and pottery. Dr Ramar Kashim, the dig leader, said a close examination of the site revealed no footprints (!!) and "no sign of recent inhabitants". He added: "It is the most baffling thing I have ever seen." A Dr Rupert Klemp is cited as being convinced that "UFOs are being piloted by superior beings who travel from era to era." We can just conceive of a future in which Coke becomes the 'in' drink with a decadent time-travelling set. The story is from the *Sunday Sport* (21 Sept 1986), which is more of a nudes-paper than a purveyor of reliable information. Just where are these quoted archeologists from? we'd like to know. And what happened next with this potentially dynamite (if true) discovery?

▲ At the Iron Age hill fort of Maiden Castle, near Dorchester - where previous digs unearthed bone tools, spearheads, wine jugs etc - archæologists have found a stuffed alligator! "We believe the alligator was buried as a joke on future generations by the archæologist Sir Mortimer Wheeler when he excavated here in the 1930s," said a spokesman for English Heritage. This is pure supposition, of course; we doubt whether Sir Mortimer was known for a sense of humour in archæological matters. *D.Telegraph* 10 Sept 1986.

THE BVM RETURNS TO CAIRO

On 11th April 1986, six members of a fact-finding committee, appointed by, Patriarch Shenudah III of the Coptic Orthodox Church, to investigate rumours of appearances of the Blessed Virgin Mary (BVM) at the church of St Demiana, saw the apparition for themselves. Reports that the Virgin Mary, "clad in white", was appearing above the twin domes of the church began on 25th March, and as the news spread, thousands surrounded the church each night. According to the Cairo newspaper *Watani*, cited by the UPI reports, there have been almost regular incidents, lasting between a few seconds and 20 minutes, including a flood of light during a power failure that left that quarter of the city in darkness.

The committee were conducting an all-night vigil on the roof of the church, situated in a northern slum area of the city, when they saw the BVM at 3:40am, and continued seeing whatever it was until 5am. 80 minutes would be long enough, we would suppose, to determine any trickery or natural origin, but the committee came down convinced about the "unusual spiritual phenomena" including the "repeated appearance of the Virgin Mary." "Miracle cures" have been reported already, and so have "doves of light", a persistent smell of incense in the church environs, and "unusual light" streaming from the interior of the domes at night. The BVM is sometimes reported as carrying the infant Jesus, or accompanied by St George.

So far these phenomena have followed much the same form as the celebrated apparitions above the church at Zeitoun in 1968 - in fact so similar are they that we had to check we had not got old reportage by mistake. The *Times* reports: "None of this has appeared in Egypt's daily press, except for one disparaging reference to boys playing with torches outside a church. Only the Copts' own newspaper has carried the news in full. Christians, who make up perhaps 6% of the population, see the official silence as an example of their treatment as an oppressed minority." Such a persistent light phenomenon is surely worthy of study by ufologists!

Sources: [UPI] San Francisco (CA) *Chronicle*, [UPI] Lincoln (NB) *Journal*, [UPI] St Louis (MO) *Post-Dispatch* 14 April; [UPI] Lincoln (NB) *Journal* 1 July; *Times* 19 Aug 1986.

This year we have learned that relations between Moslems and the Coptic Christians in Egypt have been steadily worsening, and the apparitions can be considered as a timely antidote to the burgeoning of Islamic fundamentalism. In February, 69 Moslem extremists were arrested after three Copt churches were set ablaze, supposedly in retaliation for a fire in a mosque 300 miles south of Cairo, which they believed was started by the Christians, but which was later discovered to have begun with a short-circuit. Nearer Cairo, at Beni Sweif, extremists torched a church and two Christian businesses after rumours swept through the town "that Christians had sprayed Moslem women with a liquid that printed an image of the cross on their clothes." Surely we have here an example of sectarian foaflore in the context of a religious conflict? *Int. Herald Tribune* 2 Mar 1987, citing *Al-Ahram* and *Al-Akhbar*.

THE SPACE VILLAGE

The Italian village of Damanhur (pop. 180) - named after an ancient Egyptian town of wizards - looks to the future, its own future, as a space colony. The villagers have printed thousands of leaflets, in four languages, to be sent all over the world, describing their space project seriously. They have even written to the space powers volunteering their whole community for a one-way trip into space on the next available rocket. The Soviet Union and Japan have not replied; NASA said they'll keep the request on file (probably the round one!).

Everything about Damanhur is unusual, evocative, exotic. Located near Turin, it is a self-proclaimed, classless city-state; its yellow flag has two squares, symbolizing the eternal quest for knowledge. It has streets with names like Street of Hope, Path of the Initiated, and Horus Square. At its temple - at the Grove of Prayer, in the Wood of Conscience - an eternal flame burns amid statues of all the ancient gods.

Damanhur was founded in 1976; its citizens - described as drop-out intellectuals and professionals - practice animism and aqua-culture, take the names of animal or plant spirits, and greet each other with one hand over their heart. In this hippy-Utopia everybody works 12 hours; no-one smokes or takes drugs. They believe they have conquered scepticism, envy, impatience, hate and "perplexity and curiosity". Above all they are deadly serious about their space-quest. Coboldo (Roberto Sparagio, 31), a former journalist and town spokesman, said: "It is not important when we leave. What is important is that we are ready to depart in the spirit of colonizers at any time." With no help forthcoming from the US or USSR, Damanhur has written to a Texas oil billionaire - "We know he is spending millions of dollars to finance survival-in-space schemes," says Coboldo - but are still waiting for his reply. Beaumont (TX) *Enterprise* 14 Sept; Houston (TX) *Chronicle* 18 Oct 1986, citing Chicago *Tribune*.

GOD FORSAKEN

☐ While he was reading a book titled *When bad things happen to good people* on a subway train in New York City, a priest was mugged by two transvestites. *Sun* 12 July 1986.

☐ Worse! God was mugged in San Francisco - that's official! Two men were arrested after they had attacked and robbed a man identified, from his stolen wallet and passport, as P. God. When police tried to trace him, to swear out a complaint, they found that God had checked out of his hotel in a hurry after the experience, leaving no forwarding address. [UPI] Plattsburg (NY) *Press Republican* 1 May 1986.

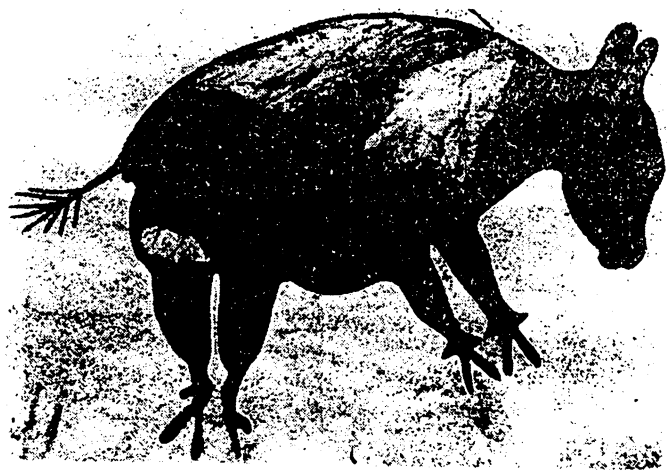
ANOTHER CHINESE LAKE MONSTER

Tianchi ['Heaven Lake'] is, as its name suggests, close to the clouds, which traditionally harbour dragons. This "spectacular" crater lake, on the Chinese side of its border with North Korea, at the peak of a dormant volcano, Baitoushan. At this frigid, desolate site in the Changbaishan region - 220 miles from the Korean capital of Pyongyang - there is only a weather station. Deng Dehui, who has worked there for seven years, said there was a persistent story of "creatures" in the lake, including a gold-coloured monster with a large horned head on a long hairy neck. The first sighting was by hunters "a century ago", but since then there have been about 500 witnesses, said Dong, including his co-workers. About 20 years after the first sighting, six people saw a "strange beast" [*"quai wu"*] the size of a cow. It gave a "deafening howl" when they shot it in the stomach, and it sank without a trace. Other witnesses agree on the cow/ox size, adding that it has a seal-like head and is black with a white belly. [AP] Tampa (FL) *Tribune* 8 Aug; [AP] Cleveland (OH) *Plain Dealer* 14 Sept 1986.

A significant detail is the fortean improbability of it all. Baitoushan last erupted in 1702, since when the water in its ctater has collected solely from rains and melting snows - there is no connection to rivers, and thence to seas or other lakes, through which an aquatic animal might get there. Unless it flew, or fell, or teleported, perhaps! Besides, say the locals, the lake is frozen for nine months of the year, and is supposed to have no life beyond micro-organisms. A fascinating puzzle.

Despite this improbability there is a growing body of witness testimony. The *Weekly World News* (20 Jan 1987), whose sensational stories we accept guardedly, cites a *Kweichow Daily News* account of the Tianchi Monster which renewed interest in this ancient lake phenomenon. It seems that while a party of 50-or-so tourists were at the lake, a dragon-like creature, much as described above, burst from the depths "and roared like a locomotive!", according to one tourist named as Shen Ruder. "At first nobody moved or even said a word. We didn't believe what we were seeing. But when it cocked its head and sprayed water out of its nose, somebody screamed and everybody started running," he is said to have said. We are not told how far away it was, but the visible part of its body was estimated to be 70ft-long. A marine biologist at Peking University, Dr Sun Tingkun, is quoted as saying several expeditions using sonar failed to locate the monster. "But the lake is large and has hundreds of underwater caves. Just because we haven't found it doesn't mean it isn't there."

A DIPROTODON'S PORTRAIT?



Percy Trezise, an acknowledged expert on aboriginal cave art, has claimed to have found a well-preserved image of a diprotodon, a hippo-sized marsupial from the Little Ice Age. He thinks the painted carving is about 10,000 years-old, which would make it the oldest example of an indigenous people's art outside Europe, he said. Australian academics, who are said to regard Trezise as a "maverick", are sceptical of the age of the drawing, and that it depicts a diprotodon; but they acknowledge that it would be a stunning find if he is right. "It would be [like] watching fossils come to life in front of me," said a leading paleontologist, who did not want to be named before he could see the painting and judge its authenticity.

Trezise had already left Brisbane to return to the remote northern Queensland site when the story broke. He had said he found the painting six weeks previously on the ceiling of a gallery in the Quinkin Reserve, outside the north-eastern seaboard city of Cairns. The naturalistic silhouette of the animal was clearly defined, and unlike anything found before. It appears to have been repainted at least twice in remote times, he said. The diprotodon was unique to Australia, and is reckoned to have flourished for millions of years before the arrival of the first men around 40,000 years ago. It was though to have become extinct anywhere between 35,000 and 6,000 years ago, making it one of the few prehistoric animals to have co-existed with man for any length of time. *D.Telegraph*, [AP] St Paul (MO) *Press & Dispatch* 11 Sept 1986, citing the Brisbane *Sun*. See 'The Lost Australians' in Michell & Rickard's *Living Wonders* (1982) for a discussion of the question of diprotodon survival into the modern era.

GIANT WHIRLPOOLS OFF NORWAY

Huge whirlpools up to 60 miles wide have been sighted off the west coast of Norway. They pose a serious threat to oil rigs and local seafarers, according to oceanographers. The whirlpools - technically known as anti-cyclonic eddies - move at up to four knots and are caused by surges of fresh water from the rivers of northern Europe. These float on the denser sea water and are rotated in a clockwise direction by the earth's motion through space.

Although the eddies have no discernable centre, consist of barely detectable swells and in no way resemble the country's notorious maelstrom they can be dangerous, says Professor Thomas McClimans of Norway's Hydrotechnical Laboratory. If a whirlpool collides with strong subsurface currents extremely steep freak waves can rapidly form, easily capable of capsizing ships or even oil rigs. Such a phenomenon could explain some maritime disappearances. *Guardian* 2 Dec; Wolverhampton **Express & Star** 6 Dec 1986.

Giant whirlpools were known and feared by the mariners of earlier centuries, and the best known of these, called the Maelstrom - marked 'F' just above right of bottom centre - on the 16th century *Carta marina* of Olaus Magnus (**left**) , sig-nificantly associated with a giant sea-serpent. Perhaps this is a sign that we should watch out for sea-monsters in the North Sea!

THE WELSH IN AMERICA BEFORE COLUMBUS

● After 50 years study, Arthur Davies, a retired professor of Geography at Exeter University, has published, in the journal of the Royal Geographical Society, his theory about Welsh trade with America before the Colon/Columbus journeys. His interest was first whetted by the persistent Welsh legends that "Prince Madoc" had sailed across the Atlantic with a party of colonists in 1170. *[I have found a work on the subject by George Burder in 1797 - PS].* It is widely accepted that Vikings reached the coasts of Canada and New England in the early Middle Ages. English fishermen are reckoned to have fished the banks off Newfoundland by 1482, but there is no firm evidence of landfall.

Davies' paper starts from evidence that although the Norwegian Crown sought to control all trade with Greenland, British ships continued to make the voyage after 1410 when contact with the home country was broken. The natural base for such illicit trade was Cardigan Bay and ports such as Aberavon, which unlike the rest of the country were beyond reach of the Customs and Excise. When Cabot had wanted to sail west from Bristol in 1497, five years after 'Columbus', he was taken in a Welsh ship on a secret route to the mouth of the St Lawrence, demonstrating that the Atlantic seaboard was already known. Documents showed that in 1482 ships left Bristol to sail west with a cargo that can only have been intended for a fishing colony on land.

A globe compiled in 1536 marked a point on the north coast of the Hudson Strait, the southern tip of Baffin Land, which "John Scolvus" reached in 1476. Davies identifies this man as John Lloyd, "the most expert shipmaster of all England", but known to be a Welshman. 'Scolvus', he said, is German for 'expert'. Archaeological evidence indicates that a hunting party was transported, men and families, to new ground on the north side of the strait in 1475. In 1477, 15 years before 'Columbus', John Scolvus (or Lloyd) reached the opening of Hudson's Bay and may have sailed as far south as Maryland after finding the hunting party of Greenlanders he had been sent to rescue had frozen to death. The royal ban on the Greenland trade naturally led Lloyd and his fellow mariners to keep quiet about the New World. When the Gulf of St Lawrence proved a dead end in 1497 it become evident that the [future] Hudson Strait offered the only hope of reaching Cathay. "Only then and in great secrecy," writes Professor Davies, did Lloyd "approach John Cabot. His identity was later concealed by Sebastian as John the Skilful, which as John Scolvus remained a mystery until now." John Cabot himself perished in 1498 while trying to find the Northwest Passage under the patronage of Henry VII. *D.Telegraph* 7 Jan 1985; and various American news items.

For more on the controversy over the identity of 'Columbus' and the success attributed to him, see 'The Curious Columbus Confusion' by William R. Anderson, in **FT43**. For more Welsh revisionism, see ARTHUR'S STONE on p13.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

Astronomers continue to wrangle over the age of the universe. A new study by Dr Tom Shanks of Durham University puts it at nearly twice the previously estimated 15 billion years. Shanks's work has been ridiculed by fellow scientists, who describe it as "pretty flagrantly at odds with what we know," and "not to be taken too seriously".

The dispute arises because Dr Shanks is primarily interested in solving the mystery of the missing mass, that great problem which bedevils modern astronomy - and you can't do that without treading on a few distinguished toes. If we accept the 'Big Bang' theory it follows that equations concerning the observable forces of gravity require nearly ten times as much matter to be present in the universe as has yet been discovered (see **FT43** p29). The mass so far located is nowhere near enough to keep the universe from expanding indefinitely - which would be OK with us, but as William Corliss comments, there is a philosophical imperative in modern physics for the kinetic energy of cosmic expansion to be balanced by gravitational potential energy.

Dr Shanks believes that the missing mass may be hydrogen gas and that the universe is expanding more slowly than most of his colleagues propose. If this is so then hydrogen present at the Big Bang need not have transmuted into helium and lithium as modern physics predicts. The rate of expansion is given as a quantity known as 'Hubble's Constant'; if this is smaller than previously thought the universe is older. Maybe quite a lot older!

Dr Rowan-Robinson of Queen Mary College challenges Shanks and explains that both theoretical methods for calculating Hubble's Constant roughly agree and match calculations from direct measurement, giving figures from twice to four times Dr Shanks's value. Dr John Barrow of Sussex University points out that if the universe were made entirely of 'ordinary matter' (whatever that is) there should be fluctuations in radiation levels about 100 times greater than so far detected. *Independent* 4 Nov 1986; Houston (TX) *Chronicle* 13 April 1986

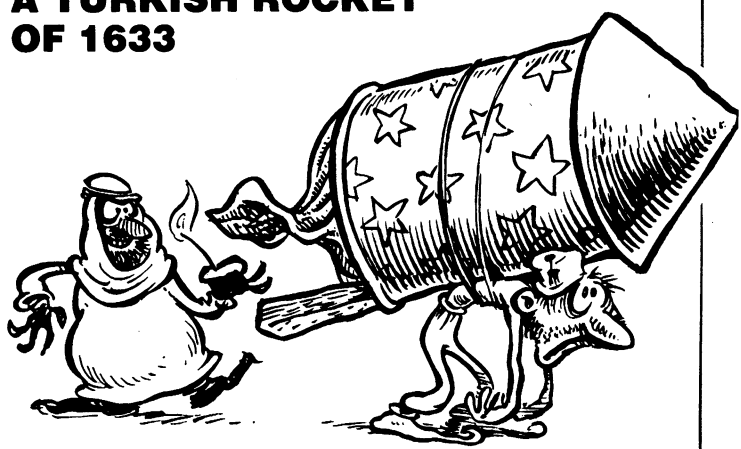
We can't pretend to guide you to any right answers in this dispute, but we will observe that if astronomers differ by up to 14 billion years on such a fundamental question they haven't advanced their claims to be an exact science much since Fort's day.

KING ARTHUR'S STONE

● Baram Blackett and Alan Wilson gave up their jobs and sold their homes 10 years ago in their quest to prove that King Arthur was the 61st hereditary king of Glamorgan and Gwent. Having studied old manuscripts and folk tales, they say that he was Arthur ap Meurig ap Tewdrig, who lived between 503 and 579, and is buried in a ruined Dark Ages church on the hillside of Caer Caradoc near Bridgend, South Wales. They have excavated part of the site, without the necessary permission of Cadw, the Welsh historical monuments organisation, and have found a stone slab at a depth of six feet, bearing markings consistent with a royal tomb. Last we heard (*D.Telegraph* 1 Nov 1986), they were trying to pursuade Cadw to remove the slab, under which, they were sure, lay the remains of the fabled monarch. To maintain the integrity of British Myth, thundered the *Telegraph*'s leader, "That slab must be left where it is."

See also *The Independent* 30 + 31 Oct 1986. For more revision of Welsh history see WELSH IN AMERICA on p12.

A TURKISH ROCKET OF 1633



Turkish historical records indicate that Lagari Hasan Celibi made a flight in a nine-foot-long steel rocket, powered by gunpowder, in 1633 to amuse the daughter of Sultan Murad Khan IV on her birthday. The Houston *Chronicle* (19 Aug 1986) said that he jumped nine hundred feet above the Bosphorus, landing safely in the water with the aid of what are called "eagle-wings", probably the first hang-glider. Celibi was later made chief rocketeer to the Turkish army, which had dabbled in rocket weaponry since the 15th century. The *Daily Mail*'s report (26 Aug) says that Celibi was tied to the rocket, which ran out of fuel at 900 feet, when he made his eagle-wing descent. "There is a strong possibility that he was drunk at the time". We are not told how he untied himself. Marest Ltd. of Norway, which makes offshore surveys for the oil industry, has been asked to locate the rocket, which is supposed to be lying at a depth of 90 feet, not far from shore.

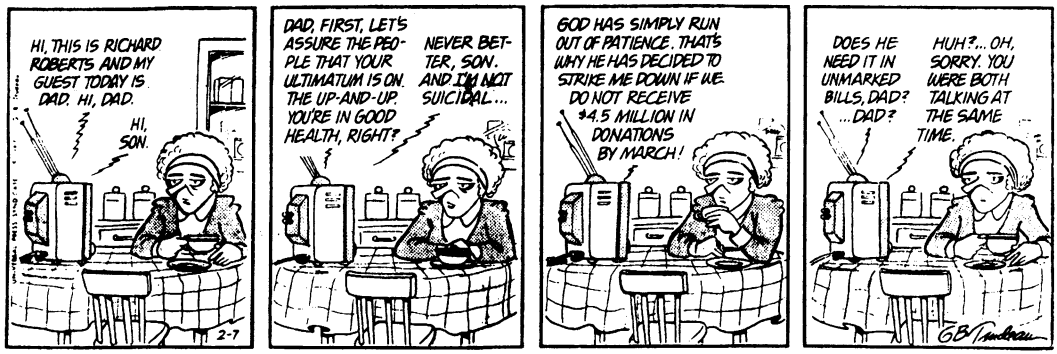
YOUR MONEY OR HIS LIFE

One of America's best-loved hellfire preachers is a worried man these days. 69 year-old Pentecostalist Oral Roberts [love that name!] has been receiving death threats and he's taking them pretty seriously. They come from God, who has threatened to 'call Roberts home' if he doesn't raise $4.5 million for his new medical centre by March.

Mr Roberts - whose aides describe his conversations with the celestial Top Banana as "couched in very direct terms" - did what any good TV fundamentalist would: went back on the box to ask for donations. "I am asking you to help extend my life," he told viewers. "I need some very quick money. I need it now. Will you help save me?"The cash is needed to continue work on a $8 million 60-floor 'medical mission' which Oral says he was inspired to build after sighting a 900-foot high apparition of Jesus Christ. We await developments. *Guardian* 20 January 1987 **(Below:** How the story was used by a top American cartoonist .)

Doonesbury

BY GARRY TRUDEAU


HI, THIS IS RICHARD ROBERTS AND MY GUEST TODAY IS DAD. HI, DAD.
HI, SON.
DAD, FIRST, LET'S ASSURE THE PEOPLE THAT YOUR ULTIMATUM IS ON THE UP-AND-UP. YOU'RE IN GOOD HEALTH, RIGHT?
NEVER BETTER, SON. AND I'M NOT SUICIDAL...
GOD HAS SIMPLY RUN OUT OF PATIENCE. THAT'S WHY HE HAS DECIDED TO STRIKE ME DOWN IF WE DO NOT RECEIVE $4.5 MILLION IN DONATIONS BY MARCH!
DOES HE NEED IT IN UNMARKED BILLS, DAD?
HUH?... OH, SORRY. YOU WERE BOTH TALKING AT THE SAME TIME.
...DAD?

SOLDIERING ON

Two Japanese soldiers who fled into the Malaysian jungle as their position collapsed, at the end of World War II, were found by local Communist insurgents who fooled them into believing the war was still on, the Malaysian news agency *Bernama* reported last January.

The two men are still employed in servicing the guerrillas' 1940s-vintage weaponry. Until the late 1970s they believed that the communists were aiding Japan and that Malaysian police and security forces were allied troops. Since they learned the truth during a communist party purge the soldiers have been held against their will, fighting a war that ended forty years ago. Their story has obvious parallels with the famous case of Lt. Hiroo Onoda, who fought on in the Philippines until persuaded that the war was over in 1974. (AP) Hamilton (Ont.) *Spectator* 13 Jan 1986.

Meanwhile in the Ukraine... 30 year-old Pavel Navrotski feared that he would be executed for collaborating with the invading Germans in 1941. After the Red Army recaptured the village of Sarazhensky, 200 miles south-west of Kiev, he was hidden by his wife. She kept him in a padlocked barn and fed him through a secret hole. After his wife died Pavel - now 74 - was found by astonished relatives who came to prepare for the funeral. The Soviet authorities pardoned him, commenting, "Nobody could punish himself more than he has punished himself."

By now a creature of habit, Navrotski lives on in his barn. In all those years he only left it once, very late at night and disguised as a woman. He quickly panicked and ran back to the shed. *Guardian* 25 May 1985. For a round-up of similar cases and discussion of the related 'Oblomov syndrome', see **FT36** pp.13-17 and **FT37** pp.51-5.

THE HOLE IN THE SKY

Four teams of US scientists have camped on the Antarctic wastes, during perpetual daylight, in an attempt todetermine what causes a mysterious 'hole' to appear in the ozone layereach year. It is known to be a seasonal event from extensive records: eg. the British Antarctic Survey have measured the ozone levels above Halley Bay since 1957, and have reported that its concentration has dropped by 40% since the mid-1970s. This was verified by instruments aboard NASA's Nimbus 7 weather satellite.

Richard Stolarski, a NASA atmospheric scientist, said that the 'hole' begins to form in the Antarctic spring, just after the sun appears over the horizon, and diminishes in early November. It is unique to Antarctica, said Stolarski. "There are some interesting things going on that we don't completely understand." The project, funded by the USA's National Science Foundation and based at McMurdo Sound, will try to discover if this is an 'early warning' about future changes in the atmosphere on a larger scale. [UPI] Lincoln (NB) *Journal* 23 June; Middlesboro' *Eve.Gazette* 2 July 1986.

TWO TABOO TREES

As a postscript to Jeremy Harte's article on 'Fortean Trees' last issue, we offer these choice items of folk tradition:

☛ A 'fairy tree' in the Ballybott area of Newry has become such an attraction that it is to be preserved by the local Tourist Development Association(TDA). Ever since the *Irish News* publicised plans by the local Housing Executive for a new estate, which entailed removing the tree, the public outcry has grown. The Executive would not comment on rumours that their plans were having to be redrawn because they could not find anyone to cut down the tree, but the chairman of the council, Eugene Markey, told reporters that the tree and its immediate surrounds would be cordoned off and incorporated into any new plans for the area. Pat McElroy, chairman of the TDA, said it was "a strange sight to see a fairy tree growing in the middle of an urban area." Older citizens said they remembered their parents warnings against anyone tampering with such a tree. The fairy trees is essentially "a hawthorn bush without any thorns", and typically "sitting out on its own. It must be left to die of natural causes." It is not uncommon to find solitary bushes in fields, and farmers ploughing around them. An old lady in Larkin's pub nearby recalled an old couplet: *"He shall perish by water, rope or shot / who removes the tree from the Ballybott."* *Irish News* 2 Oct 1986.

Barely a month later we hear that a local beauty spot at Rostrevor, called Fairy Glen, was under threat from the Armagh county housing planners. No fairy tree is involved, but the angry locals are convinced that a colony of little people that they call 'the Brooneys' live in the glen. *Belfast Telegraph* 5 Nov 1986.

☛ A 340yr-old hollow elm tree in the Wiltshire village of Ramsbury, which died of Dutch Elm disease eight years ago (althouth it had been dying for a lot longer), was finally cut down by chainsaws and removed in sections by contractors (**right**). It took three hours, and the whole village stopped out of respect. One elderly lady placed a wreath at the foot of the doomed tree, inscribed: "The memory of your greatness will never be forgotten by the faithfuls in this village." Others were in tears. It was a danger to traffic, argued Wiltshire County Council, who decreed it must go.

The tree had seen history being made. John Wesley was pilloried after preaching there in the 1770s; it survived a grenade attack by American servicemen protesting at high prices at local inns during WWII; at least 20 local girls were proposed to beneath the tree, and went on to become GI brides; 12 generations of children had played on and inside the hollow base, and some were said to have been conceived there. Does the old lady's reference to "faithfuls in the village" imply a native tree-worship cult? If so it is an instinctive, spontaneous one.

The tree was also said to be inhabited by a witch, Maud Toogood, who, it was widely feared, would curse the village if the tree should be felled. The West of England Building Society (who use an image of the ancient elm as their symbol) have, wisely and benevolently, transported a 36ft oak from Epping Forest, at a cost of £2000, to plant in the same spot - perhaps the villagers should hold some sort of ceremony imploring Maud Toogood to renew her tennancy in a spanking new dwelling? The remains of the tree are being stored in a local barn until the parish council can decide upon how - in the best *Golden Bough* tradition - it can be distributed among the residents wanting keepsakes. *Guardian, D.Telegraph* 16 Oct 1986.

LONG DISTANCE RABBIT

Hunters, near the Polish city of Tarnobrzeg, caught a rabbit which had a metal tag in its ear. A check with authorities revealed that it was one of many caught in Poland and flown to France for livestock breeding. The intervening distance is about 2,000 km, and Polish zoologists are said to be "astonished" that a rabbit could home that distance. Or did it teleport? The polish weekly, *Poliytka*, cited by our source, quipped: "The good socialist rabbit did not approve of the new conservative government in France." *Neuform Kurier* (W.Germany) Nov 1986.

MYSTERY SUB EXPERT VANISHES

Swedish anti-submarine expert Prof. Svante Oden, 62, has disappeared without trace in the Baltic. He had sailed in a 10-foot boat to test new wave-sensitive equipment expected to detect foreign submarine intrusions.

Oden, whose near-mythological name will intrigue lexi-linkers, vanished in July 1986 said the *Svenska Dagbladet*. His boat was found two days after he set out, minus the scientist and his top-secret equipment. (Reuter) *Independent, D.Telegraph* 5 Dec 1986. The Swedes are now so concerned about mystery sub reports that the public can contact naval units on the same emergency number as police and fire services. (R) *Guardian* 28 Jan 1987.

An early account of mystery submarine activity appears in Kenneth Edwards' book *The Grey Diplomatists* (London 1938). In a chapter entitled 'Pirate Submarines', Edwards reports that from August 1937 several British merchant ships were 'attacked' off the Spanish coast while attempting to run a Nationalist blockade during the Spanish Civil War. One vessel was sunk and a British destroyer depth-charged a submarine which it said had fired a torpedo at it. At the time, however, all but one of the boats available to the Spaniards at the outbreak of war were still loyal to the Republicans, who had no motive for attacking their own supply ships. Since more than one submarine was operating - reports came in from all over the Mediterranean - and since the British discounted claims that Italian or German craft were involved, the mystery is still officially unsolved.

See also HOT AIR on p22.

THE MAD GASSER OF SOUTHSEA

In an attack reminiscent of a 1944 panic which hit Mattoon, Illinois, a Southsea man was put in hospital recently by an assailant who sprayed him with a malodorous gas.

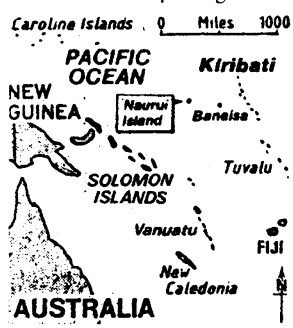
Mr Andrew Neill found a small fair-haired and pigtailed young man loitering outside his St Andrew's Road, Southsea, home at midnight on the night of 20-21 August 1986. When challenged the man sprayed gas into the faces of Mr Neill and his Alsatian dog, causing severe eye irritation. As his victim fled indoors Neill's attacker put another burst of gas through the letter box.

During the Mattoon panic citizens reported being affected by a sweet-smelling paralyzing gas apparently sprayed by a mystery assailant who entered their homes at night. A similar wave of assaults also swept Botetourt County, West Virginia, in 1933-4. But perhaps in the Southsea case the more mundane explanation of a would-be housebreaker armed with a can of Mace applies. *The News* (Portsmouth) 21 Aug 1986.

FISH FALL ANSWERS CASTAWAYS' PRAYER

Three fishermen from a tiny Pacific island in the Kiribati group survived 119 days adrift in a 16 foot open boat at the mercy of wind and currents by catching 25 sharks with their bare hands, clubbing them to death, drinking their blood and eating them raw. The ordeal of Take Taka, Tatiete Kannangaki and Bakatarawa Labo, two Protestants and a Catholic, began on 4 April 1986 when their engine broke down within sight of their village. Currents swept them to Naurui, more than 430 miles away. They were finally rescued when a Naurui fishermen noticed birds feeding on fragments of fish devoured by sharks following the barnacle-encrusted vessel. "One of the most remarkable things they told me," said Sgt Paul Aingilea of the Naurui police, "was that one Saturday night, while they were praying for a different kind of fish because they were sick and tired of shark, something fell into the boat. It was a rare blackish fish which you can never catch trawling. It never comes to the surface, and lives about 620 feet down." *D.Telegraph* 25 Aug 1986.

This story is one of the most remarkable we've heard, for it is not merely a courageous saga of everyday shark-wrestling folk - they wrestle octopuses too! , see **FT43** p5 - but has the fortean motifs of the 'answered prayer' and the 'fish fall'. To dismiss the conjunction of these as the product of coincidence would not diminish the wonder of it, still less 'explain' it. In the annals of our data on fortean falls, this incident has no rival and is of more than passing interest because it contradicts the 'officially' endorsed waterspout theory, by which, it it is said, surface water and the fishes in it are sucked up. Still, the skeptics could fall back on the 'bird-dropped-it' notion, and simply ignore the statement , by fishermen, that "It never comes to the surface", or else suppose the hypothetical bird dived to around "620ft"!



Our antiquarian friend Bob Skinner thought the circumstances of this 'answered prayer' were similar to a case recorded by Increase Mather, in his *Remarkable Providences* (1684). Bob writes that Mather cites in turn from James Janeways *Remarkable Sea Deliverances* , the story of 12 people adrift for 5 weeks in a long boat after their ship sank off New England: "God sent relief to them by causing some flying-fish to fall into the boat, which they ate raw and were well pleased therewith. They also caught a shark, and opening his belly, sucked his blood for drink." (Mather, 1890 edition, p13.)

MORE CLOUDS OF UNKNOWING

In **FT42** and **FT45** we reported on the enigmatic mushroom cloud that appeared off the Japanese coast in April 1984. Now we learn of a whole cluster of similar phenomena from an article by Andrew Alexander and Jeff Smith, syndicated by Cox News Agency.

In early 1983, analysts at the National Weather Service in Anchorage, Alaska, were scanning infrared images sent from a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration satellite when they detected a large plume coming from the Arctic Ocean near Bennett Island, off the north coast of eastern Siberia. Computer enhancement revealed three distinct sources: one on the island's north-east corner and two others about nine miles offshore coming from the ice-covered water. Together they formed a plume six miles wide, 155 miles long and nearly 23,000 feet high. At the next pass of the satellite several hours later, it was gone. A similar plume was logged two weeks later. According to separate sources, the CIA was so intrigued that it ordered a high-speed surveillance plane to the area. What was discovered, if anything, is unknown. Some scientists speculated that the plumes were caused by the release of methane, but Andre C.Change, a seismologist who has studied unexplained phenomena for the federal government, found this unlikely, as the rock formations of the area were pre-Cambrian, and thus too old to still hold methane. Volcanic eruption was also unlikely as an explanation as the area was "not a very promising area for vulcanism", according to Lindsay McClelland of the Smithsonian's Scientific Event Alert Network.

In 1984, the first of eight massive plumes, the most recent in February 1986, were detected by the NOAA over Novaya Zemlya, the Arctic island long used by the Russians for nuclear weapons tests. There were no correlations between the clouds and known tests, and in any case the 200-mile-long plumes were far larger than the largest conceivable nuclear explosion could produce. NOAA officials at first suspected volcanic activity, but there is none in that area. Other speculation has included Soviet "weather modification" tests and research into the "nuclear winter" hypothesis.

During 1986, fresh evidence has appeared that the April 1984 cloud, originally thought to be east of Japan, may have been further north, near the Kuril Islands in Soviet territory. The new location was determined by Daniel A.Walker, the Hawaii geophysicist mentioned in the **FT43** report, after extensive questioning of the pilots. However, no-one has begun to offer a satisfactory explanation for any of the strange clouds. The Tampa, FL, *Tribune-Times* and Las Vegas, NV, *Sun* 20 July 1986.

GRAVE ERROR

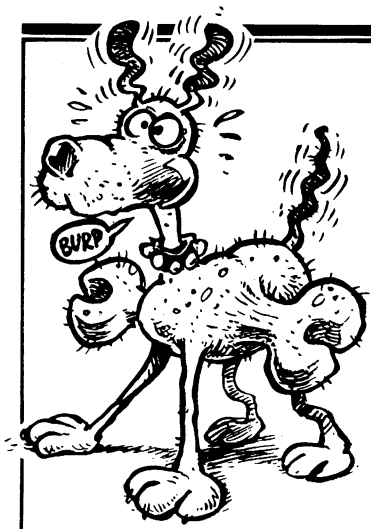
Baffled historians have wasted eight years trying to discover the identity of the person buried at Evercreech Church, near Shepton Mallet, in a grave marked, simply, 'H.W.P.' The Wessex Water Authority finally put them out of their misery (and into another kind!) by revealing that it was a marker for church's hot water pipe. *Sun, D.Telegraph* 23 Aug 1986.

ANOTHER GOLDEN OLDIE

Hearty thanks to Nick Maloret who rescued this bizarre story from a book called *Uncanny stories - Weird happenings to Daily News readers* (c.1926) - but which is unlisted in the British Library Catalogue - being is a compilation of (mostly ghost) stories sent in to the London *Daily News*. Blyth is on the Northumberland coast, "in familiar Black Dog country," adds Nick. Fort's remarkable case of the SHC of Wilhelmina Dewar (*Books* p929f), took place in nearby Whitley Bay in1908. Here is the facsimile:

The Magic Dog

THE following incident is strictly true and I tell it just as it occurred. In the village of Cowpen near Blyth, where I resided for seventeen years, my friend, Mr. J. T. Furnass, an evangelist, connected with the London Evangelisation Society, was at the time the incident occurred, conducting revival services in the mission hall in Cowpen village. At the close of each evening service it was customary for my friend Mr. Furnass and I to go for a long walk before retiring. One lovely bright moonlight night, when returning from our usual stroll and near to a small Roman Catholic cemetery (time 11.30 p.m.), a large black dog appeared at our side. From whence it came we knew not. It had the appearance of having travelled a long distance, judging by its lolling tongue, its tired and jaded look. It stood for half a minute or so and we both spoke to it and remarked that it must be lost, and we were about to walk on when, to our great surprise, the dog seemed to pull itself together and, rising before our eyes, gradually spread itself out to about the size of an ordinary bed quilt, then it sailed away from where we stood leaving us standing spellbound. We watched it drift away over the tops of trees, and finally disappear from our view travelling skyward. During Mr. Furnass's short stay at Cowpen he and I went to the same spot two or three times at the same hour, but we never again saw the dog or anything unusual.



GUT-WRENCH STORY

Lattie, a Labrador retriever in Wareham, Mass., had an uncharacteristic loss of appetite. Taken to the vet, she was found to have a lump in her stomach, which an X-ray revealed to be a 10-inch-long, 14-ounce wrench she had been carrying for at least a month. Mused the vet: "She'd have had to take it down like a sword swallower would." Harrisburg (PA) *Evening News* 21 Feb 1986.

TRICKS OF THE TRADE...

A fireman in Bath, attempting to use a metal detector to trace water hydrants in a road which had been covered by tarmac, dug seven holes in the wrong places before realising his steel toe-caps were activating the device. *D.Telegraph* 25 July 1986.

OUTSTANDING!

Kasbi, 34, from Sikebut in Indonesia, has never forgiven himself for his meanness to his mother shortly before her death in 1972. He has been standing on the same spot, gazing out at an empty rubber plantation in front of his house, for the last 14 years. He attracts a crowd every day. *D.Express* 20 Feb 1986.

GETTING IT TAPED

Our foaf-alarm has alerted us to a new category of improbability, of which we offer the following two examples. In keeping with the subject, the sources are suitable vague.

◆ In the March 1987 edition of *FATE*, in the 'Quirks of Fate' column by Harold Helfer, we found an unreferenced note about a tragedy involving two friends on a beach at Maui, Hawaii. It seems Greg Arvanites was videotaping the antics of Richard How, who was clowning in the surf - or so Greg thought. Greg had unknowingly filmed his friend fatally drowning.

◆ In the same week we read that, the second story turned up with the arrival of *Weekly World News* (10 Feb 1987). Peter Larsen, of Herning, in Denmark, bought his wife Anne a video-camera to record their family life. One day, Peter 57, collapsed with a coronary, and instead of reaching for a phone, Anne grabbed the camera. "I could have died right there on the living room floor while she panned around for the right angles and light. Thank God my son got home from school and called for help," grumbled Peter. According to a security guard at the Herning General Hospital, Mrs Larsen was still shooting as the paramedics tried to revive her husband, and she even tried to follow him into the coronary emergency unit. "We had to physically restrain her," said security chief Alex Kruger. "I've never seen anything like it." Mrs Larsen said: "The way he was acting I thought he had stomach pains. By the time he had passed out my son had already called an ambulance." Peter Larsen view has understandably hardened. "My wife needs professional help," he said. "She is a different woman when she has that camera in her hands. We've got tapes of everything from my son blowing his nose to the neighbour's sleeping dog."

HEAD TALES

▲ Questions about the buying and selling of body parts were addressed to the American Medical Association after a leaking box, marked 'aerosols' was found to contain several human heads, in a Kentucky warehouse. The gruesome packet was sent from Philadelphia to a medical school in Denver and was above board, if a bit soggy. The AMA was unaware a black market in cadavers. Houston (TX) *Chronicle* 23 Aug 1986.

▲ A more insoluble puzzle concerns a human female skull wedged among the branches of a conifer tree in Dudley, West Midlands. Craig Siviter, 9, climed the tree to hide from a friend and dislodged the thing. Thinking it was made of plastic, Graig took it home under his jumper and asked his mother if he could put a candle in it at Hallowe'en. His shocked mother told him to put it back where he had found it. Police later found it in a garden. Home Office pathologists said there were no suspicious signs of death. Wolverhampton *Express & Star* 3 Nov 1986.

▲ Prof. Bartel Roda, a West German archæologist, exploring the ancient city of Esen, 135 miles south of Baghdad, told reporters that he had found human skulls, dated around 2000 BC, which showed evidence of brain surgery. Esen was the capital of a dynasty which ruled Mesopotamia centuries before the foundation of Babylon. It was also a great medical centre, and the goddess of recovery, Guli, was worshipped there. *D.Telegraph* 29 Oct 1986.

▲ Two 7,500yr-old skulls containing brain tissue have been recovered from a burial pond at Windover, near Cape Canaveral, Florida. So far, the remains of 59 individuals - more than half aged under 18 - have been found preserved in the moist, "air-excluding muck" by the Florida State University-sponsored project over the last two years, including nine other skulls with brains intact.

One of the latest skulls was rushed to Wuesthoff Memorial Hospital in Rockledge, where it was x-rayed and the brain extracted by Prof. Glen H. Doran, director of the Windover project, and David N. Dickel, the site director. It was then frozen in liquid nitrogen for further study. It is hoped that their ancient DNA can be cloned (by inserting it into bacteria). The

earlier brains had been taken to Shands Medical Center at Gainsville, where microbiologists are also studying their DNA. St Louis (MO) *Post-Dispatch* 19 Sept; *Guardian* 31 Oct 1986.

▲ We'll include a related item here... Robert Connolly, a senior lecturer in physical anthropology at the University of Liverpool, announced the failure of his team's efforts to isolate DNA from muscle tissue of the Lindow Man - aka 'Pete Marsh' - the 2,500yr-old body found preserved in a peat bog in 1985 [see **FT43** p31]. "We hoped to raise his genes from the dead to see what they were responsible for, so as to have an idea of his ethnic form and background," said Dr Connolly. But it seems that was put paid to by the high acidic nature of the peat water. This note - in *D.Telegraph* 23 Sept 1986 - however, refers to the success of a University of Uppsala team in reproducing the DNA of a 2,400yr-old mummified Egyptian child; and to the similarly successful studies (where?) of the extinct quagga, which revealed it was more of a zebra than a horse.

NEARLY A FORTEAN DEATH

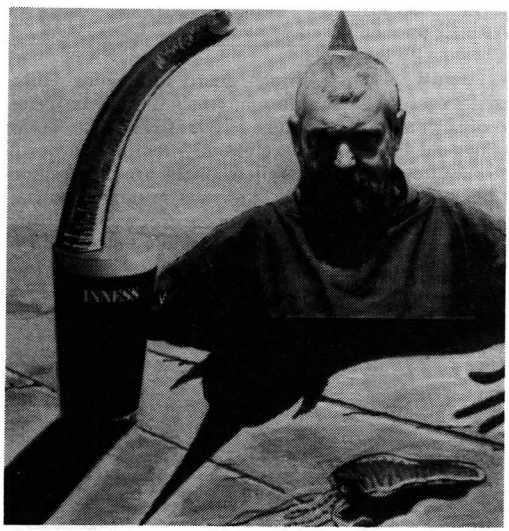
The sort of nightmare demise that has inevitably, and with a fleeting anxiety, occurred to those of us whose muse condemns them to toil in book-lined pits - became a pressing probability for 86yr-old Anthony Cima of San Diego. During a small quake - at 8:46am local time, on 15 July 1986 - became trapped when thousands of his beloved books came tumbling down (**below**). He was pinned down for 12 hours, barely able to breathe and unable to call for help, before other residents in his hotel realised he was missing. He was taken to the University of California-San Diego Medical Center, where he was a month in intensive care (**right**), and resolved to sell off most of his 10,000 volumes. [AP] Beaumont (TX) *Enterprise* 16 July; [AP] San Francisco *Chronicle* 9 Aug; *Weekly World News* 26 Aug 1986.

Our last record of such a fate was the death of a 70yr-old Long Island woman in 1977, suffocated by a toppled tower of books and, uh!, press-clippings - see **FT26** p52. We don't really count the death of a Brinks guard in Laguna Hills, California, crushed by 26 boxes of quarters [trivia freaks will know that weighs 832 lbs and is worth $13,000], when the armoured car in which he was riding shotgun swerved on a freeway. Albany (NY) *Time-Union* 4 Feb 1986.

The scene in Anthony Cima's hotel-room. Recuers heard weak cries from beneath the fallen stacks of books.

NNIDNID IN 'BLASPHEMY' SHOCK

Our old friend Doc Shiels was at the centre of a blasphemy storm at Hallowe'en last year. While being interviewed on BBC Radio Cornwall - who, for some reason, considered him an 'expert' on Hallowe'en - Doc was asked what he was planning for that night. Sharp as a whippet, Doc said he was going to invoke the Owlman - which, as longtime readers will know was first reported outside Cornwall in **FT16** (1976), and which reputedly haunts the woods around Mawnan. By evening Doc was drunk - "I had been in a couple of pubs in Penryn bending spoons." - and being followed by radio and newspaper reporters and other sightseers. The crowd found themselves outside Mawnan Smith Old Church. "It was a last minute decision to go into the church," said Doc. What happened next is obscure, despite the plethora of witnesses. Thorough-going pagan that he is, Doc was brooding about that ancient *genius loci*, doomed to ontological exile by a society gripped first by a Christianity hostile to the old gods, and then by a terrible apathetic atheism. Some say Doc was wandering about the inside of the church, smoking and incomprehensibly shouting, ending up "on top of the altar threatening God", all of which Doc has denied.



A detail from one of Doc's surrealist paintings, [©]

When news got out, the local papers were full of condemnation, with the threat of prosecution for blasphemy, and the Bishop of Truro saying, with some "horror", that the church might have to be reconsecrated. A quick tour by the church wardens quickly dispelled fears that some ghastly feat of Black Magic had been performed that night. Nothing was missing or broken into; no damage had been done. "There had been no breach of the law." Relaxing in the Stag Hunt, Ponsanooth, Doc said: I felt the presence of the Owlman and I'm sure the others did too, but they thought it was the wrath of God. I knew he was there. I have an instinct for that type of thing. I was challenging God, telling him to face the Owlman. It was a foolish thing to do because it upset the local community. I do most sincerely apologise to them." Doc even offered to buy the Bishop of Truro a pint of Guinness - "The only black magic I know about..." - but was not taken up on it. Doc said: "The real occultists probably hate me more than devout Christians."

Undaunted, Doc was in the news again shortly after: first claiming that glasses mysteriously broken on a shelf in his local happened because he was angry at the time, smoking an ESP cigar and drinking Guiness; and later with several interviews on the launch of his surrealist magazine *Nnidnid*, the first issue of which features unexpected conjunctions between plesiosaur-like monsters and glasses of 'the blonde in the black skirt' (Guinness, you pleb!). Doc has vowed - perhaps prematurely - to give up monster-raising, spoon-bending ("supernatural vandalism" he calls it), and drinking "as a kind of penance". Nnidniding is much more fun, he says. Being a branch of alchemy, one of its more accessible processes is to "bombard targets with nests and potholes." If you'd like to see for yourself, the details of *Nnidnid* are under 'Others' in our CLASSIFIEDS on p77.

Falmouth *Packet* 31 Oct, 1 + 3 + 14 Nov; *Sunday Independent* 9 Nov 1986.

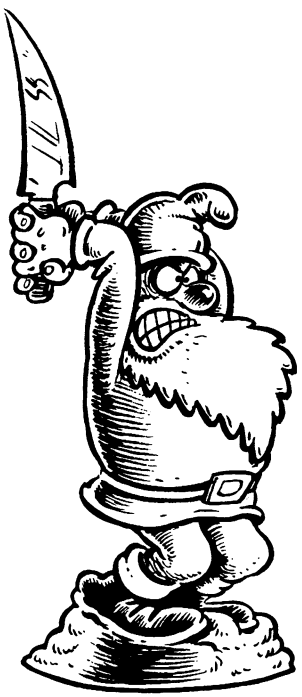
REVERSAL PUZZLE

The curious case of 'PM', a geology student in the University of Pavia in Italy, who can read and write backwards, was reported by neurosurgeons in Acta *Neurologica Belgica* in October 1986. The 25-year-old student gained the ability after the removal of a tumour "as large as a fist" from the right side of his brain in 1970, an operation which left him partially paralysed and epileptic. Dr P.Tosca of the university's department of neurology noticed that 'PM' could speak backwards as easily as he could talk normally. The student told how the first thing he said after he woke from the operation was "artsenif" (the Italian for window is finestra). The paper in the Belgian journal recalls the hypothesis that the brain stores visual images and other information on one hemisphere and mirror images on the other. It is suggested that the operation somehow liberated the mirror images stored in the non-dominant hemisphere. *D.Telegraph* 23 Oct 1986.

HER KICKS

Britain now has a female counterpart to George Mitchell, **FT**'s favourite foot fetishist (**FT46** p.13 and passim). Like George, Gail Robinson, 24, just can't stop stomping. A frequent visitor to the night-time streets of York, she has a compulsive urge to kick every policeman she sees. After a February 1986 trial her three month gaol sentence was suspended for six months on condition that she consults a hypnotherapist. *Daily Express* 15 Feb 1986.

GNOME STABS WOMAN



A woman was gravely ill in Hartlepool General Hospital, Cleveland, in July 1986, suffering from tetanus after impaling her leg a garden gnome's wooden fishing rod while working in her garden. She had an anti-tetanus jab immediately after the accident, but the virus took hold. The rod had been used to support a plant fertilised with horse manure, and it was believed that this was what had caused the disease.

Despite the sad outcome - Mrs McManus died a month after the accident - most papers sported 'Gnome Stabs Woman' type headlines - (why should we be the exception?). The local Health Authority used the event to emphasise the seriousness of ignoring the risk of tetanus.

D.Exp, D.Record, D.Teleg 12 +14 July; Middlesboro' *Eve. Gazette* 12 + 14 +16 July 1986.

FITTING NAMES

▼ The man with the job of selling lifejackets at a Bedford marina is 27-year-old Will Drown. His hobby is swimming. *Sun* 5 May 1986.

▼ Overheard on the public address system at Heathrow: "Would Dr Livingstone, awaiting Mr Stanley from Nairobi, please go to the meeting point." *D.Telegraph* 3 June 1986.

▼ From the Torbay *Herald Express*: "A Torquay man has been fined £200 for swearing at police. Nicholas Forletta, 24, pleaded guilty to using abusive language on April 19." *D.Telegraph* 7 June 1986.

▼ James Bond was slashed in the face with a beer glass by Terry McCann. McCann, 20, of Kingshurst, Birmingham, was given two and a half years' youth custody. *Sun* 28 June 1986.

▼ British sailors made something of a sport of spotting unlikely names in the Hong Kong Business Telephone Directory. They discovered: Man Sik Restaurant; Lee Kee Boatbuilders; Fu Ling U Insurance Company; Lo Kee Piano makers; and Tin Lung, a firm of brassiere manufacturers. *D.Telegraph* 26 July 1986.

▼ A coach owned by Swansdown Coaches of Inkpen, near Newbury, Berks, was travelling on the M4 near Reading in heavy rain when a swan crashed through the window injuring two passengers. The swan was killed. *D.Telegraph* 4 Aug 1986.

▼ The village of Somerton in Oxfordshire has appointed a chairman to run its annual garden produce show, whose name is Ivor Greenhouse. *The People* 12 Oct 1986.

▼ From the *Hampshire Chronicle*: "Alresford members met in their newly-decorated room at the Peaceful Home in East Street and were fascinated by a talk on rabbits given by Mr Pat Fox. He explained the various methods of catching rabbits and demonstrated a cage trap which he had designed." *D.Telegraph* 2 Dec 1986.

▼ Passengers travelling with the Brazilian state airline, Varig, should beware. The in-house magazine is called *Icarus*. *D.Telegraph* 20 Dec 1986.

WORLD'S OLDEST CHEWING GUM

Swedish archaeologists have found an 8,000-year-old piece of chewing gum at Segebro in Scania. The tooth-prints were remarkably well preserved, and prove that it was once chewed by a teenager. The main ingredients are birch gum and beeswax. The archaeologists suggest that it could have been used to fasten flint barbs to arrows. Our correspondent Sven Rosen was told that air-sick passengers on aircraft are given chewing gum, so maybe the Swedes were ancient astronauts! He further speculates that it might have been used for seasickness as well, and perhaps it was the Vikings who brought it to America. *Arbetet* and *Sydsvenska Dagbladet* 31 Oct 1985.

FIVE TRANSITIONS

★ Former Conservative MP **David James,** co-founder of the Loch Ness Phenomena Investigation Bureau, died in mid-December at the age of 66. His long association with the loch began with a 1962 expedition and in the same year he was responsible with Sir Peter Scott for the creation of the LNPIB. After the publication of the 1975 Rines 'Nessie' photos James asked the Environment Secretary in the Commons to register the monster under Schedule 1 of the Conservation of Wild Animals act.

David James claimed an October 1962 sighting of a hump, but later seems to have changed his mind and decided that what he had seen was not the monster. Among his extra-fortean activities was a celebrated wartime escape from a German PoW camp. *Daily Telegraph* 18 Dec 86. [MD]

★ **Frances Griffiths,** one of the two cousins who perpetrated the world's longest-running practical joke (according to the *Guinness Book of Records*), indelibly known as 'the Cottingley fairies', died in Belfast in July 1986, aged 78. She was just nine when she and Elsie Wright constructed the famous fairy photos which, says Geoffrey Crawley, editor of the *British Photographic Journal*, "became the icons of the childhood imagery of fairies worldwide." Elsie collaborated with Crawley in the definitive expose of the hoax (see 'Cottlingley Unmasked' by Janet Bord in **FT43**).She admitted she was relieved when the deception was over, holding her own peace until her children were grown up.

Frances married in 1928, and was a school matron for many years. She is describbed by her family as a "highly intelligent, utterly honest woman", who maintained to the end that she actually saw fairies. Her daughter Christine said that she continued to see fairies, the last one popping up beside her as she stood at the kitchen sink when she lived in Nottingham during WW2. "The publicity as a child had upset her too much," said Christine, "She was horrified and ran out of the room." S.*Times* 13 July; *British Journal of Photography* 25 July 1986. [RJMR]

★ **Dr J. Allen Hynek** died of a brain tumour at the end of April 1986, aged 75. There is very little we can add to the number of long obituaries in the media (on file) and in many UFO journals, except to say that he will long be remembered as one of the soundest influences upon the study of UFOs. As a leading member of the 'invisible college' he helped drag ufology, kicking and screaming, away from its domination by cranky and cultish groups into the light of reason. He founded the Center for UFO Studies, in Evanston, Illinois, in 1973, which is to be renamed the J.Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies. [RJMR]

★ The last surviving witness of the famous apparition of the Virgin Mary at Fatima, Portugal - **Erminia Caixeiro** - died at her home in North White Plains, NY, in March 1986, aged 91. She was 23yrs-old when she and two younger children had the first of a series of visions on 13 Oct 1917. *Weekly World News* 8 April 1986. [RJMR]

★ **Dr Eric J. Dingwall** died on 7th August 1986, aged 96. He was born in 1890 and was active in the SPR from 1920, maintaining a bizarre love/hate relationship with its officials. His scholarship was encyclopedic and profound, and he reveled in its obscure by-ways. Dingwall earned some notoriety for several works dealing with forms of sexual deviation (including fetishism, male infibulation) and was an acknowledged authority upon historical erotica. This interest was extended both to the psychology of these phenomena, and to his conviction that there were sexual elements to many spiritualistic and mystical phenomena, or at least in the lives of their practitioners, and demonstrated in his biographical studies in *Some Human Oddities* (1947) and *Very Peculiar People* (1950). Among his many works, special mention must be made of the four volume *Abnormal Hypnotic Phenomena* (1967/8) which is unrivaled in its scope and scholarship.

Dr Dingwall was always ready to help the genuine inquirer from his vast fund of knowledge and his unique library. A long obituary (by D.J.West) appears in the SPR *Journal* (Jan 1987), but even this omits a little-known fact of some interest to us; Dr Dingwall was an early member of Thayer's Fortean Society. [RJMR].

HOT AIR

A mystery submarine which sent New Zealand air force search-planes to the Cook Islands in the South Pacific could have been a whale, according to ITV's teletext service (*Oracle* 16 April 1986). Local fishermen reported sighting a 'nuclear submarine' on the surface in February. When nothing was found, NZ Prime Minister David Lange did a quick about-turn and declared, "I have a strong suspicion that it was a whale with flatulence". We can't see much similarity... but that's politicians for you.

See also Peter Kels' letter (NEPTUNE'S MYSTERY SUBS) on p3 - and MYSTERY SUB EXPERT VANISHES, on p16.

TIGER! TIGER!

■ Panic siezed the inhabitants of a small Indian village near Calcutta when a tiger strolled down the main street, and it was driven into the bush with screams and shouts. Shortly thereafter a National Parks keeper arrived looking for the beast, which he said was so tame it would let children ride on its back. He found it easily enough - it had "dropped dead of fright" just off the path. *S.Express* 26 Jan 1986.

■ In Taiwan a female tiger was due to be slaughtered and its meat sold as a magical aphrodisiac. It was bought for £5000, at the last minute, by Chinese priests who claimed to have "converted it to Buddhism" before sending it to Kaohsiung Zoo. *S.Express* 9 March 1986.

A bad sign . . .

. . . at least it was for driver Betty Ruth Davis whose car struck a road-side stand in Temple, Tex., sending it flying through the rear window of the car. Luckily, no one was hurt.

From *Weekly World News* 17 June 1986.

WORDS FROM THE BIRDS

► A Russian parrot can recite Shakespeare's eighth sonnet in English. It also gives a rendering of a Pushkin poem, preferring the English translation, according to Tass newsagency. It belongs to the family of Boris Kozyrev, who lives near Minsk, and is said to be an avid watcher of English language lessons on TV. *D.Telegraph* 29 Sept 1986.

► Another Minsk bird is Leonid Germatsky's raven Karlusha, who let him know how neighbouring ice fishermen were doing, with her vocabulary of about 60 Russian words. The bird strutted from one hole in the ice to another, loudly proclaiming the catch. However, Karlusha did not know the word for pike, and "threw all the anglers into commotion with his shriek 'ter-r-rible!'". *South African Star* 15 Mar 1983.

► An Italian nun has stunned Roman Catholic authorities by claiming that God speaks to her through her parrot. Sister Florence Christina is now hoping for a release from her order in Bologna to preach worldwide. She said she was asleep when she first heard God's voice, but woke up to find it was comming through her 10yr-old pet. *Sunday Sport* 6 Dec 1986.

► An escaped parrot in Healdsburg, California, sat in a tree taunting firemen with "I can talk, can you fly?" *Sun* 17 Oct 1986.

EAGLE-EYED

Carol Robbins, a Miami meter-maid, could just be the least observant person in Florida. On Monday 7 January 1985 she ticketed a battered blue Oldsmobile taking up two spaces in a downtown parking lot. On Tuesday morning she issued a third ticket to the same car.

This time she noticed someone in the front seat, so Ms Robbins knocked on the window a couple of times and moved on. Returning at about noon she finally noticed that the driver - a 45 year-old woman - was dead from a self-inflicted revolver wound to the head, administered the previous day.

St Louis *Post-Dispatch* 10 Jan 85.

SKYE MAGIC

When David Hitchcock and his family saw their dream cottage at Ardvasar, on the Isle of Skye, they bought it for £40,000. Now, one year later, they are having to sell up after their dream turned into a nightmare.

The first incident that frightened the Hitchcocks was the discovery of human "fingernails" scattered on their doorstep. On another occasion a criss-cross pattern of Rowan branches was found also outside their front door. They were told by "Black Magic experts" that there was now a curse on the house. David's daughter, Paula, and accountant, was "accosted in a lonely wood by two hooded cackling crones." The last straw was when a gang of workmen quit; they had been engaged to place a wheelchair path around the house for Paula's brother Andrew, who suffers from mucular dystrophy. David Hitchcock said: "Enough is enough... there is something sinister going on here." The family are leaving the island frightened and shattered, driven out they believe by a witchcraft conspiracy. *S.Express* 21 Dec 1986.

Scotland's outer islands retained their pre-Christian ways longer than anywhere else, and the living faith in witches, second sight and fairies has continued to attract folklorists into the 20th century. Next issue we shall have a few more examples of paganism in the modern world.

NIGHTS ERRANT

DREAM TOPPING

Colin Kemp woke up one night in August 1985 and saw his wife lying dead beside him. 'He couldn't believe it. "I slapped her face and tried to wake her up," he told police. "There was no pulse and I went barmy."'

Shortly after going to bed the previous evening Kemp dreamed that he was being chased through a jungle by two Japanese soldiers who were trying to kill him. One soldier was armed with a gun; the other had a knife. Kemp kept running but they cornered him. He grappled desperately with the man with the knife, trying to throttle him; then the other soldier raised his gun and fired. Kemp woke up.

For Ellen Kemp, 33, it was more than a dream. She had been strangled by her husband while he was in the grip of a 'night terror' - an arousal from sleep accompanied by intense anxiety. Night terrors last from 1-3 minutes and generally occur in the first third of the night's sleep. They are not nightmares, which are experienced during periods of light sleep and 'rapid eye movement'; night terrors occur during arousal from heavy, dreamless slumber. They are rare, afflicting only 3% of children under 15 and fewer adults, and tend to be caused by waking tension. And they are 'almost never fatal'.

Although Colin Kemp's experience does sound more like a nightmare proper - recall of the events of a night terror is unusual - his defence of 'automatism' was accepted and the jury acquitted him of his wife's murder at an April 1986 trial. Amidst some controversy - a feminist group called the acquittal 'a charter to kill', alledging that he had dragged his wife to the foot of the stairs to make her death look accidental - Kemp was freed to return to his three children and his Caterham, Surrey home. A trial lawyer commented, "It is clear that these things do happen. However, I don't think the public need be concerned about it happening again. It is very rare." *Guardian, D.Mirror, D.Express* 3 May 1986.

He was quite wrong of course. Here are a few cases from our files - similar examples can be found in David Hufford's excellent book *The terror that comes in the night,* reviewed in **FT40**.

◆ On 18 January 1985, 18yr-old Adrian Lilienfield of Twickenham repeatedly stabbed his best friend, Michael Cummings, and beat him with a mallet, whilst in the grip of a night terror. Cummings was left paralysed from the neck down. Linienfield was cleared of attempted murder and claimed that he dreamed he was being attacked by four men in a windowless room. "One of his attackers had been lying down and he just hit him," the court was told. "Then he had the sensation of falling backwards down a dark tunnel moments before waking up." Lilienfield said he had taken a knife to bed with him as a joke. *Guardian* 15 Oct, *Richmond & Twickenham Comet + Twickenham & Hampton Gazette* 17 Oct, *Richmond & Twickenham Informer* 24 Oct 1985.

◆ Possibly the oldest case on record concerns a 17th century British soldier accused of murdering his colonel. He was cleared on the grounds that he had been asleep and was therefore incapable of forming the necessary intent.

In a celebrated 1878 incident, Edinburgh resident Simon Fraser killed his baby son while dreaming that his family was attacked by wild beasts. Fraser had a history of rushing out into the streets and attacking passers-by in his sleep. *Sunday Times* 4 May 1986.

◆ Back in 1936 a Bristol man was cleared of assaulting a girl, successfully contending that he had been sleepwalking at the time. Bristol Evening Post 28 Nov 1986

◆ On New Years' Day 1960 American army sergeant Willis E. Boshears awoke to find he had killed the British girl he had picked up the night before; his hands were still around her throat. He could not recall experiencing a night terror but was acquitted on the grounds of automatism

Twelve years later a diabetic male nurse named Quick was tried for assaulting patients at the mental hospital where he worked. His defence was 'insane automatism' caused by low blood sugar level on the day in question. *New Scientist* 26 June 1986.

BEDTIME WITH BANZAI

In the wake of Kemp's trial many *Daily Mirror* readers responded to a request for their experiences:

◆ Like Colin Kemp, ex PoW Albert Cole-Bowers' dreams involve the Japanese - but with more reason. He has been assaulting his wife for 40 years, apparently because of night terrors caused by memories of being tortured with sharpened bamboo poles and witnessing the Nagasaki A-bomb explosion whilst part of a forced-labour detail in a nearby mine.

◆ Devon housewife Marilyn Eglington's husband went to see an SF film locally and ended up trying to strangle her. He explained, "I thought I was being hunted down on the Planet of the Apes."

◆ In 1961 newlywed Jean Farmer was nearly strangled while husband Lew dreamed he was pulling his injured brother from the path of a train. She bit him and he woke up, but later on that night the same thing happened again.

◆ Pamela Bulpit hit her husband several times whilst dreaming that she was stabbing 'Daniel Freeman', a soap-opera character she had watched blackmailing his stepmother the previous evening. "Daniel is a nasty piece of work," she commented, "I thought, 'You pig' and quite deliberately stabbed him full-force in the chest."

◆ Glynis Bieganski of Stockport is married to a bouncer who beats her up while he sleeps. While dreaming that he had been attacked by two thugs her 37 year-old husband Philip gave her two black eyes. When he woke up he wanted to know who had done it - so he could work them over.

◆ Lorry-driving Geoff Briscoe, 61, gets frustrated by problems on the road, so he takes it out on dream vehicles while he sleeps. Once he thought he was kicking a jammed clutch-housing, but woke to find his

shaken spouse cowering in a corner of their bedroom. A case of "that was no clutch-housing, that was my wife!" *D.Mirror* 14 May 1986.

◆ Meanwhile Coventry publican Eddie Atkins dreamed his wife was good enough to eat. She woke up one night to find his teeth clamped to her shoulder. When aroused he muttered, "Sorry love, I thought I was eating a chicken leg," and went back to sleep. That's what you call a double-edged compliment! *D.Mirror* 13 + 15 May 1986.

Psychiatrist Morton Schatzman, famous for his handling of the 'Ruth' case, had a few pertinant comments to make about night terrors in the *New Scientist* article (mentioned above). The physical effects, he says, include accelerated heart beat, deep and rapid breathing, profuse perspiration and screams, moans or swearing. 'Sitting bolt upright' is another product of night terrors.

Colin Kemp told Schatzman that he had dreamt of being pursued before, about eight months before the killing, and had hit his wife and on one occasion kneed her in the back. According to the psychiatrist, night terrors are recurrent and may even run in the family. The best modern guess is that they are at least partly caused by "small bilateral clusters of nerve cells in the pons, an evolutionarily ancient part of the brain." These pontine cells "send impulses that inhibit the nerve cells in the spinal cord that control movement" - which sounds a bit more random than the highly co-ordinated actions needed to strangle someone. But Schatzman also believes that violence during night terrors is very rare; as the *Mirror* survey shows it is more likely to be fairly common but little-mentioned. Assaulting your partner is hardly something to tell the neighbours about.

DEAD OF NIGHT

Possibly related to the above is the strange affliction known as 'Oriental Nightmare Death Syndrome'. It affects South East Asian refugees in the United States and by November 1983 the US Centers for Disease Control had collected 79 fatal cases involving 60 Laotians, 10 Kampucheans and 9 Vietnamese. All but one were seemingly healthy males, and all but one died in their sleep. Some made gurgling noises and foamed at the mouth, leading observers to speculate that they died of fright. But others expired quietly and the CDCs are anxious to play down the theory that terrifying nightmares are causing the deaths.

The medical literature also contains examples of the syndrome reported from the Philippines, Hawaii and Japan. So far there seem to have been few female and no non-Oriental fatalities, and doctors describe the symptoms as compatible with 'cardiac dysrythmia', a condition in which the heartbeat is irregular. But no-one seems to know what causes that either. (UPI) *Chicago Tribune* 13 Nov 1983. See Mick Goss's article 'The touch of death' in **FT31** for another possible connection.

REINCARNATION ROUND-UP

The story of the Spanish boy recognized as an incarnation of a Tibetan Lama - see p5 - had us looking into our file on the subject. Here are a few recent items we found...

► Inoka Shamalee **(below left)** was born to a poor family in the Sri Lankan village of Pethiyagoda in 1980. At the age of four she began talking about her previous life as Milani Chandrika, whose family was in a higher economic class. "We had electricity, painted walls and a large radio with a tape recorder", she told her parents M.S. and Rota Perea. She talked much of her brothers and sisters Shamlie, Bandu, Sudu and Loku. Finally, her parents decided to investigate, and took Inoka on the long trip to Minuwangoda, Milani's home village. (The account in the *Weekly World News*, 28 Aug 1984, doesn't explain how they knew where she had lived.)

Milani, 11, **(below right)** had been killed in a motorcycle accident eight years before Inoka was born. Inoka insisted first on visiting the temple and the chief priest Loku

Milani Chandrika (right). Has she been reborn in Inoka Shamalee **(above)**?

Hamuduruwo, who had been the dead girl's religious teacher. He was stunned when she talked to him of things that only Milani could have known. She wandered around the village pointing out the places Milani had frequented, and knew the exact spot on the road where she had been killed. At the dead girl's house she asked "Where is my doll?", and then requested 'her' marbles and glass bangles. After a long talk and many questions, Milani's mother embraced Inoka as her long-lost daughter.

► A woman who raised a cobra in the belief it was her dead son reincarnated, died when the snake bit her in Trincomalee, eastern Sri Lanka. *S. Express* 1 July 1984.

► Perry Bond, 42, had pleaded guilty to defrauding two banks and three widows out of more than half a million dollars, and in October 1984 was testifying in a Miami court against co-defendant Robert Wayne, a Miami lawyer accused of preparing bogus real estate documents for the scam. After two hours' testimony prompted by Assistant US Attorney Peter Kostopulos, who painstakingly laboured to establish the credibility of his star witness, it was defence lawyer James Jay Hogan's turn. He strode across the courtroom and unveiled a large photograph of Jean Harlow in a bathing suit.

Hogan, quite straight-faced, asked Bond if he recognised the platinum-blond bombshell. He said he did. He was then asked if he had once occupied the body displayed in the picture. He said he had. Bond, 'officially' born five years after Miss Harlow's death in 1937 at the age of 26, confirmed that he had hovered above the body and watched as doctors injected it with drugs. The prosecutor cringed and the jury choked back guffaws. Hogan solemnly continued his cross-examination for three hours, with the picture of Harlow prominently displayed before the jury. "There was nothing I could do", said Kostopulos; but he had some time to rebuild his case. A mistrial was declared on 15 October after the judge suffered an apparent heart attack. Meanwhile, Bond was free on bond. St Louis *Post-Democrat* 18 Oct 1984.

Sharad Agrawala, who allegedly remembers his life as Jayanti Sivaraman.

► Rajeeb Balub readily admitted murdering Sattar Khan, the 70-year -old pedlar who had shuffled into the remote village in Uttar Pradesh in late 1984. The 25-year-old woodcutter told astonished police that he had battered the old man to death with an iron bar in revenge for the ill treatment he had received in a former life when he was a dog and Khan his master. "He starved and beat me, and yet still wanted me to protect him. But when his treatment left me too weak to guard even myself, he took me to a lonely spot, crushed my legs with a rock and left me to die." Balub instantly recognised Khan when he arrived in the village, and decided he must die. He produced two defence 'witnesses': a monk called Ka Vabi who believed his story after several lengthy talks, and a 71-year-old village elder who recalled seeing the pedlar about 40 years earlier, when he was always dragging a scrawny, half-starved dog along on a piece of rope. Most officials were skeptical of the story, but with belief in reincarnation so strong, they were looking for any others who could remember the pedlar and his dog. *S.Express* 27 Jan 1985.

► A female monkey wearing a gold necklace and earrings and roaming a west Java town was believed by residents to be the reincarnation of a 16-year-old girl, according to the *Jakarta Post* (7 Aug 1986.) Her parents had offered a reward to anyone who could catch the monkey and turn it back into their daughter. They said she had died and become a monkey after donning the family's 'magic robe' without permission. [R] *D.Telegraph* 8 Aug 1986.

► That same month, Sharad Agrawala, 8, (**right**) was taken by his parents to a mental health clinic in Delhi, because of his disturbing dreams. The case came to the attention of psychoanalyst Dr Brijlal Zahida, who hypnotised and interviewed the boy twice weekly for two months. He has come to believe that Sharad remembers a previous life as a fabric importer in Betul called Jayanti Sivaraman. His recollections are very lucid and are not the kind of thing that can be found in history books. Under hypnosis the boy says it is 1881, talks at length about the Chinese silk business and of his deep love for his wife Tanu. Though there is a dearth of public records on file at Betul, several old people remember Sivaraman and say that he died in 1910 at the age of 90; and they confirm nearly all the boy has said about him. Further investigation was blocked by Sharad's superstitious parents, who didn't wish him to be taken to Betul. *Weekly World News* 14 Oct 1986.

► A "love-sick ape" has been pursuing women through the main street of Sonepat in the northern Indian state of Haryana, and has sunk its teeth into at least two dozen

so far, according to the UNI news agency (17 Nov 1986.) All attempts by police to capture the animal have failed. Local people were saying that it was the reincarnation of a frustrated lover. Cleveland, OH, *Plain Dealer* 19 Nov 1986.

► Muhneh Zayad Salman, 28, an Israeli of the Druze sect who had evaded compulsory military service for eight years, told a military court in Haifa on 30 December 1986 that he didn't want to serve in the Israeli army because he was a reincarnation of a Syrian soldier crushed to death by an Israeli tank, according to the Itim news agency. He asked to be allowed to serve in a place where he would not have to see a tank or use a weapon. The prosecutor requested leniency because of the Druse belief in reincarnation, but the three-judge panel sentenced Salman to three years in a military jail. Three years military service is compulsory for all Jewish and Druse Israeli men over 18. Other Israeli citizens, such as Bedouins, can volunteer. [AP] Schen, NY, *Gazette* 31 Dec 1986.

► Lastly - The parish magazine of St Michael's Church, Devonport, reports that a local man is so convinced of the reality of reincarnation that he made himself the beneficiary of his own will. *West. Morning News* 18 July 1986.

Paul Sieveking

CLEVER BIRDS

John B. Brice, writing to the *Times* (10 Sept 1985) said: "Recent observations of the travelling habits of some of London's feral pigeon population suggest a level of intelligence hitherto unsuspected. Using the District Line, I have seen pigeons boarding the Underground trains at Edgware Road station and later alighting at various points along the line. Fulham Broadway and Parson's Green seem to be favoured and also Putney Bridge if it is low water."

HOMING TEDDY

Mairi Hedderwick, 46, of Arconnel Terrace, Inverness, was given a teddy bear when she was a baby. "He lay about our former home on the Isle of Coll till he was put out in the skip", she told the *Sunday Mail* (22 Sept 1985). "He got dumped at the other end of the island and was washed out to sea. Six months later he found his way round the the island and was washed up near our home. We moved house and returned to the island two years later on holiday, and there was Teddy, washed up again!"

ANIMAL ODDITIES

◆ Katrina the cat came back from the dead in Pleasanton, California, after being put down by lethal injection. The corpse was put in a deep freeze, but two days later Katrina strolled back into her old home a couple of miles away, showing no ill effects. Dr Richard Elliott, who gave the injection, could think of no explanation. *USA Today* 29 Jul 1983.

◆ Islander the donkey is so named because he survived 18 years marooned on a small islet off the west coast of Ireland. Abandoned there when the whole island's human population was evacuated by the Eire Government, Islander lived on a diet of seaweed and grass with the help of the occasional fisherman who trimmed his hooves. The donkey, thought to be 25, now lives at a Devon sanctuary. *D.Telegraph* 21 Jan 1985.

CRIMINAL CROPPERS

☆ David Morris, 21, unemployed, from Beckenham in Kent, was passing the time before a date with his girlfriend when he wrote a note reading: "I have got a gun in my pocket and I'll shoot it off unless you hand over the money." He then went into three shops in London Road, West Croydon, London, and passed the note over the counter.

At a drug store, a girl assistant refused to accept the note, believing it contained an obscene suggestion, and Morris left. Next door in a hardware shop an Asian assistant looked blankly at Morris, shook his head and said he couldn't read English. Morris then went to a takeaway food shop, but the assistant couldn't read the note without his glasses. Morris asked for the note back, and hung around in the street outside. Arrested soon afterwards, he told the police: "I've been a twit... I only pretended to have a gun." He was put on probation for two years. *D.Telegraph, D.Mail* 20 Feb 1986.

☆ 1985 was a classic year for self-incriminating burglars. Stuart Lawrence broke into a shoe shop, leaving behind a bail form from a previous offence. He was jailed for 15 months at York Crown Court in January. A man burgled a Dortmund flat, leaving behind his papers and a razor-sharp passport photo. He was tried in February. Peter Richardson, 33, burgled a house leaving behind a locket with his name and address. He got nine months at Snaresbrook Crown Court in March. Kevin Barwick, 35, from Plymouth, broke into a TV rental shop during the January blizzards. Footprints from his size 8 wellies led straight to his front door. In April, the magistrates gave him three months, suspended for two years. A thief who grabbed an armful of cameras from a Frankfurt photographic shop left behind freshly taken passport photos. He turned himself in in August. In September a man trying to cash stolen travellers cheques in the Yorkshire bank, Leeds, left his passport behind. *D.Mirror* 19 Jan, 23 Mar, 3 Apr,11 Sept; *Soester Anzeiger* 23/24 Feb; R. *Guardian* 24 Aug 1985.

☆ A burglar broke into a baker's shop in Viblach, Austria. As he crept across the office in the dark, he was attacked by Lola the cockatoo. During the fight, the burglar knocked over a glass tank containing Egor the viper. By torchlight he saw Egor slithering across the floor. At that moment, the baker's pet mynar, Peppino, started his favourite imitation - a doorbell. Terrified, the burglar crashed through a window, cutting himself as he escaped. Baker Robert Koloini, roused by the noise, came downstairs to find his office in chaos, but the £2,000 in his safe still intact. *S.Express* 11 Aug 1985.

FRENCH KANGAROO CAPERS

Our colleague Jean-Louis Brodu investigated reports of kangaroos sighted in the Moselle region of France last year (1986), and sent us this statement:

"Sometime around the 17th June, an anonymous motorist saw what he later described as a kangaroo jumping onto the road, near Morange-Silvange, and bounding into a nearby wood. Inquiries were made at a new zoo, near Hagondange, which was just two weeks from its public opening: their shipment of wallabies had not yet arrived, so the mystery beast was not one of theirs. Two employees from that zoo went to investigate, and were reported to have seen the creature themselves. It was about a metre high (apx 3ft) and jumping on its hind legs, and lurking in bushes. Several local youngsters came forward, saying they had seen *two* kangaroos the previous day."

"The regional media and some national radio-stations sent reporters to cover the event. The Gendarmerie said they had received no reports of kangaroos escaping from a circus or anywhere else, and they appealed to the increasing numbers of sight-seers to tell them if they saw anything. Because the kangaroo has quite a humourous image the gendarmes were less anxious than they would have been if the sightings concerned a large exotic feline. The kangaroos were not seen again, but a hunter told the gendarmes something which helped put a rational ending to the story in a fashion already familiar from other mystery animal cases. The hunter, who was not from Morange-Silvange, had spotted a small deer with deformed (shortened) front legs (the result of an injury, he supposed). The poor, lame animal was skipping and hopping in its flight. This would be the zoological equivalent of the misinterpretation of an IFO for a UFO, except that, like the putative mystery marsupial, the existence strange deer was never confirmed by capture or another sighting."

"But the story wasn't over. By now the zoo was open, and it was rumoured that the phantom kangaroos were part of of a publicity campaign (although one journalist I spoke to denied this as a slander). Some sociological perspective may help one understand, not the event, but the general mood around Hagondange, in which heavy industrial plants had closed down with angry workers clashing with police during riotous protests against redundancy in 1985. Hope of an economical recovery in the region were pinned on a *Smurfs* theme park, a project made more uncertain by the establishment of the French Disneyland near Paris. People here are particularly craving for an excitement away from a dull reality. It is not far from Sierk-les Bains, where, in September 1985, an alleged portrait of Jesus appeared on a wall stained by damp [see **FT46** p25]. Whatever it was that caused the first sightings of the mystery roos, the people and the media jumped in concert to embrace this welcome departure from the usual."

"Legends of strange forest beasts abound in the folklore of Lorraine, among which the White Doe (*La Biche Blanche*) is prominent. These tales of the past might well prepare the ground for modern stories of encounters with strange animals, but are there any other cases of kangaroos at large in France? The previous year there was one, used as a filler by many French papers - *le Republicain Lorrain* 29 July 1985, for example. It occurred in an interview with a colonel of the Gendarmerie, about the weird things that happen to people on motorways. Some of the stories were 'classical' contemporary legends of the motorcar - baby's buggy on the roofrack with baby still in it, etc. One story recalled a man's incredible string of bad luck: during his holidays he dined with friends, and the chandelier falls on his head necessitating eight stitches. The next day he comes down with food poisoning and spends three days in hospital. Driving home on the motorway his car hits a... kangaroo. He begs the gendarmes to sign an affidavit to the fact, so that he could tell of his misadventure without accusations of lying. The beast's owner was never traced, and we have no confirmation of the reality of these events."

"Regarding the Marange-Silvange sighting, I can only give

THE RICHEST WRECK YET!

In January 1656, the *Nuestra Senora de la Maravilla* left Vera Cruz for Spain with 650 people on board, including a Spanish admiral. It made a stop in Cuba and was only a day or two out of Havana as part of a small flotilla when a foggy winter storm severely impeded visability. The *Maravilla* collided with another ship and sank along the Bahama banks. She was carrying 30 to 40 tons of silver and a solid gold 3-foot statue of the Madonna and child. The ship's manifest lists treasure that would be worth $1.2 billion at today's prices, but treasure hunters generally add to the manifest figure, because much of the cargo aboard such ships was contraband and unlisted; the suggested figure is $1.6 billion. The only wreck known to contain a more valuable cargo is the San Hose which sank in 2,000 feet off the Columbian coast and has never been found.

The Spanish tried for 40 years to salvage the Maravilla, but 50 feet of sand prevented them. A few million dollars of treasure was uncovered in the early 1970s from one section of the ship, but the rest wasn't found until the crews of Memphis businessman Herbert Humphreys Jr scanned the ocean floor with sophisticated electronic equipment in May 1986. So far, sand-blowing equipment has enabled the salvagers to bring up dozens of emeralds, gold and silver coins, swords, muskets inlaid with gold wire, a cannon, Spanish pottery and priceless Ming dynasty porcelain. Humphries pays 25 per cent of the recovered wealth to the Bahamas, while his Maritime Archaeological Research Ltd. keeps the rest. Most of the treasure will be put in museums. Saginaw *News* 30 Nov 1986.

way to some fortean 'expressions': In the wake of the Chrenobyl disaster [**FT47** p27f] a phocomelian deer transforms into a kangaroo; dog food rearranged through an egregorial process into marsupial shape; boomeraning kangaroo teleportation through times and continents. And for lexilinkers, I offer the final touch: this part of Lorraine was known in the old days as *Austrasie*."

ELEPHANT OVERBOARD!

A dead elephant floating in a Florida canal has been towed out to sea by coastguard officials, because it was a health hazard. The 12-foot animal was decomposing when it was found, on 2 August last year (1986), at Marathon in the Florida Keys. How it got into the canal is a mystery; "We have no missing elephant reports," admitted Captain Mike Long. The coastguard speculated that it could have been "thrown overboard" [sic] from a passing ship. We are vaguely reminded of the celebrated 'sea serpent' carcass which turned up in the New River Inlet, just north of Miami, back in 1885. (AP) New York *Daily News*, St Louis (MO) *Post-Dispatch* 7 Aug 1986.56

YETI NEWS

On the 6th March 1986 a young physicist, Tony Wooldridge, encountered a yeti in the Himalayas, when an avalanche obstructed the progress of his run to raise money for charity. Tony managed to take a few photographs which may have historic significance, being the first photographs of such a creature rather than of tracks or dubious relics. On the strength of Tony's evidence the previously sceptical Prof. John Napier, author of the standard reference on primate morphology, has publicly declared that he is now "a yeti devotee". We give the full story on p++. Recently, there have been several other items relating to the yeti:

► The outspoken Bishop of Durham - whose professed scepticism about Jesus' virgin birth, resurrection, and other widely-held dogmas, was believed by the faithful to be the *real* reason the God blasted York Minster [see John Michell's article in **FT43**] - has also told of seeing a yeti. Dr David Jenkins spoke of the encounter to presenter Libby Purves of BBC Radio 4's *Midweek* (date uncertain, probably23 or 24 Oct 1985) during an 'off the record' talk prior to the radio interview. When Ms Purves raised the topic during the show Dr Jenkins reluctantly declined to talk about it. She said later: "He told us that he had glimpsed a great hairy thing - like a giant monkey - while taking a break in the Himalayas from military service in India. He didn't claim that he'd seen the Abominable Snowman - only this monkey-like animal. When he described it later to local residents, they told him he had seen a yeti." The sighting was probably sometime between 1940-1945. *D.Mirror, D.Star* 25 Oct 1985.

► This comming June,according to the *Guardian* 10 Jan 1987, Italian climber Reinhold Messner is to make a return trip to the Tibetan Himalayas, where he came within 33ft of a yeti in July 1986. Messner, the first man to scale all the world's 14 highest peaks, was making a trek through Tibet, at 13,779ft, one afternoon when "it popped out from between the trees. In the first instant I thought it was a yak. But it was no yak. Neither was it a man, nor an ape nor a bear," he said in a signed article in the German magazine *Bunte*. It stood on two legs, was just under 6½ft tall, and was covered with shaggy black hair except for its face. The creature dropped to all fours and trotted off; Messner tracked it for nearly two miles before he lost it. At about 10pm that same night he saw the silhouette of another yeti by moonlight at the edge of a wood. It made a low whistling noise before vanishing from sight into the wood. The next day, he and villagers found more tracks. Messner was angry at the way the first news of his sightings was "treated like a Loch Ness Monster tale". He said he had not previously believed in the yeti.

Many sources on file.

► A vague announcement in July 1986 said that six zoologists from four US educational institutions and eight Chinese scientists are to form an extensive field expedition to the Himalayas [not said where exactly, or even who or when!], ostensibly to catalogue "threatened and endangered species such as the Argali sheep". They are taking alon James Halfpenny, author of *A field guid to mammal tracks* (1986) who felt sure he could settle the question of whether the yeti is bear, monkey or man "If I can only see some tracks." [UPI] Auburn (IN) *Evening Star* 30 July 1986. Does anyone have any news on this expedition?

► "Reading Stan Arminton's *Trekking in the Nepal Himalaya*, I gathered that vivid dreams are common at high altitudes, as also is a heightened sensitivity to alcohol. Presumably these are both symptoms of oxygen starvation of the brain, the dreams being a nocturnal form of hallucination. [My husband and I] were disappointed not to hallucinate a yeti, or better still to actually photograph whatever tore to pieces a yak at one of our camping sites [in the Khumba area of Nepal]. The local Sherpas were convinced it was a yeti and they do not suffer from altitude effects." Letter to *New Scientist* 18 Sept 1986, from Jill Abery, Sittingbourne, Kent.

► Villagers near Srinagar, in the Indian Himalayan state of Kashmir, reported sightings of yeti in the early hours of both 15 & 16 January this year (1987). Zaman Mohammad Khan, nightwatchman at a sheep farm, said he heard the yeti *clearly calling out his name* and the names of his fellow workers. When they rushed out into the night, they saw a hairy figure, about 4ft tall, running away. A health visitor to the farm had also heard the yeti *asking for medical treatment,* said the United News of India agency, quoted by the Los Angeles Times News Service, quoted by the Huntsville (AL) *Times* 23 Jan 1987. Yetis are problematical enough, but talking yetis? There have also been reports of talking sasquatch: this strange topic deserves a fuller treatment - any takers?

Bob Rickard

STRANGE CULTISH KILLINGS

THE SALAMANDER LETTER

An extraordinary series of bombings and religious controversies has shaken the Mormon church and its normally placid capital Salt Lake City, leaving two dead. A third bomb 'victim' is charged with two counts of first-degree murder, two of 'delivery or placement of an infernal device', 13 counts of theft by deception and 10 of communications fraud. He is expected to stand trial any day now.

The accused, a well-known Salt Lake dealer in rare documents called Mark Hoffman, allegedly obtained several important manuscript collections relating to the early history of Mormonism which showed that the sect's founder, Joseph Smith, practised dowsing and folk magic, directly contradicting church teaching.

According to orthodox Mormon doctrine, Smith was visited by the angel Moroni in September 1823. The angel guided him to a buried cache of gold-leaf plates on which were hieroglyphics. These, when recovered and transcribed by Smith, proved to be a record of American history from 500 BC to 400 AD which showed that Christ and several Judaic prophets had sailed to America from Palestine - see **FT46** p.23 for Christ's visit to Burnham-on-Sea. A similar find in 1843 yielded the history of a tribe descended from Noah's son Ham. Smith was lynched by an anti-Mormon mob a year later, but the sect he founded has flourished. It now claims some five million members worldwide and exerts considerable political influence in the USA.

Among Hoffman's finds is the so-called 'Salamander Letter', written in 1838 by Martin Harris, one of Smith's earliest disciples. Harris is one of the church's 'Three Witnesses' to the truth of Smith's claim that an angel guided him to the golden plates. But in his rambling semi-literate letter - which has been tentatively authenticated by the mormon church after a $20,000 investigation - Harris writes that, "In the fall of the year 1827, I hear Joseph found a gold Bible. I take Joseph aside and he says, 'It is true. I found it four years ago with my stone, but only just got it because of the enchantment. The old spirit came to me three times in the same dream and says dig up the gold. But when I take it up the next morning the spirit transfigured himself from a white salamander in the bottom of the hole and struck me three times and held the treasure...'"

Further evidence of Smith's fortean leanings comes from an 1825 letter, the oldest known in the prophet's own handwriting, which advises a Pennsylvania clergyman on how to test "if any valuables remain" in a treasure trove. "You know the treasury must be guarded by some clever spirit and if such is discovered so also is the treasure," Smith writes, continuing: "So do this - take a hazel stick one yard long being new cut and cleave it just in the middle and lay it asunder on the mine so that both inner parts of the stick may look one right against the other." Apparently describing a form of dowsing, Smith concludes that if treasure were present the sticks would "close together of themselves."

The prophet also used a luminous smooth round 'peep stone' in his treasure-seeking activities. In a letter recently rediscovered in Houston, Texas, the disillusioned Mormon apostle Wiliam McLellin tells how Smith received his revelations while in a 'trance state'. "He would usually seat himself and seem to be in deep contemplation for a few moments," wrote McLellin, "then commence and deliver a sentence to his scribe, who would write it down, then read it vocally, then J.S. would deliver more - and so on until the communication was finished."

Mark Hoffman, 32, is accused of killing both prominent church-member Steven Christiansen and Kathleen Sheets (wife of another Mormon leader) with pipe-bombs on 15 October 1985. On the 16th Hoffman's car was destroyed by a similar bomb and he narrowly escaped with his life. Police found lengths of piping, 'bomb-making equipment' and airline tickets in the boot of his wrecked car, and turned up an unlicensed sub-machine gun in a search of his home. They believe that Hoffman accidentally blew himself up on his way to bomb a third victim. Those killed were involved in the $40,000 purchase of the Salamander Letter for presentation to the Mormon church.

Hoffman had also borrowed $350,000 to secure further Smith

END OF THE WORLD: POSTPONED

Members of the 'Seventh Day Adventist Reformed Church' in western Kenya believed the world would end with the arrival of Jesus on 27th October 1986. When Jesus didn't turn up the ultimate catastrophe was postponed to 27th November.

Much ill-feeling against them was caused when they urged married women to leave their husbands to "join a free world in which they could serve all men unselfishly." (Sounds frightfully sexist.) The authorities rounded up more than half of the 300-strong sect because they were holding back agricultural development and disrupting school programmes in the area by declaring it was all unnecessary in view of the world's imminent end. When the world didn't end, sect members said the dread event would be a year later. The official Seventh Day Adventists said they had nothing to do with the sect. *Sun* 18 Nov; *D.Telegraph* 27 Nov 1986.

This fatalistic sect operates in the Kisii district, which, according to the *Guardian* (19 Nov 1986) has a reputation for "harbouring more religious sects than any other part of the world." They recall one which believe that on a certain day they could fly to Heaven. On the appointed day they gathered beneath a tree, each covered in chicken feathers. The leader climbed and jumped, and to the disappoint ment of the assembly, fell and was killed. In a non-material way, perhaps he did fly to Heaven after all!

papers, including a 116-page original portion of the Book of Mormon itself. Salt Lake police believe that he was in debt and decided to abscond with the money when another deal with Christiansen fell through. Hoffman claimed to have obtained a collection of documents known as the McLellin papers, which were actually in private ownership in Texas. The papers allegedly contained further evidence of distortions in Smith's 'divine revelations' as well as accounts of drunkeness and polygamy among early church members. Anxious to prevent the imminent discovery of his fraud, Hoffman kiled Christiansen and bombed Sheets to create a diversion, police theorise.

Another hypothesis proposes that the bombings were the work of Mormon fundamentalists dismayed that co-religionists could involve themselves with documents which brought the basis of their faith into doubt, while others believe that the disasterous failure of a real-estate company in which Christiansen and Gary Sheets were involved prompted the killings.

The Mormon church's interest in history and documentation stems from the belief that, given the requisite information, souls can be saved even after death. The church exhorts members to keep detailed journals and maintains what is perhaps the world's largest genealogical library in a nuclear bomb-proof underground repository.

Hoffman's parents have begged him to ask for a conviction on the charge of first-degree murder, which carries an automatic death penalty - according to Mormon belief murderers can only be redeemed by submitting to their own execution. Hoffman disappointed them by agreeing to plead guilty in return for a life sentence. He has not admitted that documents he supplied - including the Salamander letter - were forgeries, as the prosecution will allege at the trial. But New York document dealer Charges Hamilton (sic!) is convinced of it: "Mark Hoffman is unquestionably the most slilled forger this country has ever seen," he says.

Sources: May 1985 - Jan 1987, too many to list, but on file.

MORMON A MAN CAN STAND...

Echoes... As Mark Hoffman languished in gaol the Great Salt Lake finally overflowed, causing widespread chaos in normally arid Utah. The lake has nearly tripled in size since 1963 and is now bigger than the state of Delaware. In May 1986 it rose to a record elevation of 4,211.65 feet above sea-level, smashing the old 1873 high and flooding large areas. The lake is fed by rain and rivers running down from the Rockies and has no outlet, shrinking only through evaporation. As emergency measures were instituted and an all-day pray-in was washed out by further downpours, former Mormon bishop Robert Hunter was appointed to head up a six-county task-force. He refused to discount the possibility of divine intervention, commenting, "It's never been my position to second-guess the Lord." *Daily Mail* 8 May, Providence (RI) *Journal-Bulletin* 23 May 1986.

A month later Israeli archaeologists announced the discovery in Jerusalem of a 2,600 year-old text engraved on the remains of two silver amulets. The extract from Numbers 6, 22-27 is the oldest biblical text yet found and recalls the gold-leaf plates unearthed by Joseph Smith. *Belfast Telegraph* 20 June 1986.

We also note a small clumping of cultish killings and trials in the wake of Hoffman's arrest. In July 1986 Ma Anand Sheela, personal secretary to Bhagwan Shree Rashnish at his Portland, Oregon commune, received multiple sentences of up to 20 years in gaol for a series of poisonings. Sheela (formerly Mrs Sheela Silverman) effectively controlled most of the commune's activities as *de facto* leader while Bhagwan remained inscrutable, and bumbled around in his Roller. Jealous of the influence of her guru's personal physician, Dr George Meredith, she attempted to kill him with a home made poison. He survived, but in the summer of 1985 'the Bengal Tigress' went on to poison 750 restaurant customers by introducing salmonella into the food. Her aim was to prevent them voting during a county council power struggle between the commune and locals. All pulled through, but Sheela and two female accomplices have begun long prison terms and face eventual expulsion from the US. *Guardian* 24 July 1986.

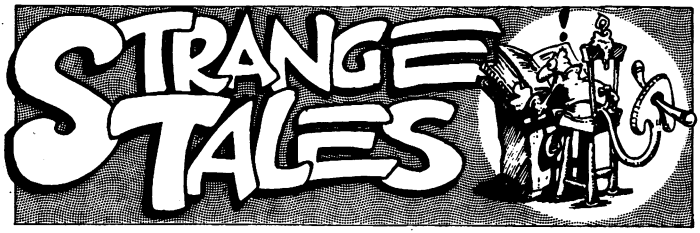
On 29 September 1986 a small bomb exploded at the main Masonic lodge in Brussels, injuring one person and causing extensive damage. Police described it as the most serious bomb attack in Belgium for more than a year. *Int. Herald Tribune* 30 Sept 1986.

MAD LUDWIG

The alleged perpetrators of a bizarre series of murders came to trial in Verona in December 1986. Local-born Marco Furlan and his German friend Dr Wolfgang Abel, a Munich mathematician, were accused of 15 ritual killings between 1977 and 1984. Their victims - seemingly selected for 'degeneracy' - included a gypsy burned alive in his caravan, six clients of a pornographic cinema, a prostitute, a homosexual, a Venetian waiter, two drug addicts and three priests, one of whom had a spike with a crucifix attached to the handle driven into his skull [See **FT39** p.28].

The murders were committed throughout northern Italy apparently in the name of the nineteenth century German playwright Otto Ludwig, who preached that sinners should be killed with clubs. Most of 'Ludwig's victims were battered to death with hammers or an axe, and responsibility for the murders was claimed in a series of notes to local papers. The accused were arrested in March 1984 at a crowded Mantua disco where they were found dousing drapes and carpets with gasoline whilst dressed in Pierrot costumes - see **FT38** pp.46-8 for more on fortean clown imagery. Meanwhile staunchly Catholic Vernoa tends to blame Abel's supposed Calvinist obsession with sin for the killings. *Guardian* 13 Dec 86.

Mike Dash



AN ENCHANTED CAVE

About 27 kilometers from Papeete in Tahiti is a large opening in a mountainside called Maran's cave, the reputed burial place of a powerful magician. One of his spells is said to be responsible for an invisible barrier that prevents stones hitting the opposite wall of the cave, across the flooded floor. It looks very easy to throw a stone against the far side, but visitors have tried with all their might, using slings, only to have their projectiles drop ignominiously in the water a few feet away. *Chicago Journal*, reprinted in the *Hay Springs News* 19 Aug 1921.

NATIVES OF THE RED DRAGON

A curious article, 'The Red Dragon Stamps' by C.H.R.Andrews, appeared in a journal called *The Stamp Lover* in 1928. Apparently, collectors had been mystified over the previous months by the appearance of certain small denomination British stamps overprinted with a red dragon. Some 20 letters and postcards were known to exist, all having pairs of stamps, the left one of which bore the overprint. Invariably, both were cancelled, although only the normal stamp could pay postage. At the time of writing, none had been reported for nearly two months. The first of these stamps was reported shortly after the disappearance of Rhys Evans, 71, a well-known Welsh book collector and expert.

Evans left home in Sketty, Swansea, on the afternoon of 4 April 1928 to show his friend, Professor Jenkins of University College, a very old Welsh book of stories and legends, which he carried in a waterproof wrapper. It included an account of a secret sect or clan responsible for the guardianship of five sacred dragons, and a crude plan which Evans hoped his friend cold decypher. Evans never reached the College, a short walk away. Two days later, his wife received a letter from Cardiff, bearing a pair of penny ha'penny stamps, one of which had the dragon overprint. The message, in Welsh, told her not to worry, as her husband was quite well, and it bore what was undoubtedly his signature. The note ended with the words *"Trigolion y ddraig Goch"* [Natives of the Red Dragon]. Various people subsequently received letters from this group, all bearing dragon stamps and all referring to old Welsh articles. The postmarks were from Cardiff, Cardigan, Wrexham and various towns on the sites of old Roman camps.

Evans turned up five days later, sitting by the lake in Bripmill Park. He was in good health, and would give no explanation of his absence. The ancient book was missing, and he seemed unconcerned about its loss, which was quite out of character. He stated enigmatically that "there were dragons in Wales today"; but refused to elaborate. Coincidentally, a report from Llandegley, near Radnor Forest, stated that three children saw a huge beast in the forest, and that one, bolder than the rest, attempted to follow it. His way was blocked by two men who escorted him part of the way home. They were dressed in white with red dragons emblazoned on their chests.

OOPS!

An odd tale of an H-bomb dropped on New Mexico on 22 May 1957 has come to light through the the Freedom of Information Act. A B-56 bomber hit turbulence en route from Biggs Air Force Base in El Paso to Albuquerque's Kirtland Air Force Base. The navigator, First Lieutenant Bob Carp, grabbed the bomb release lever to keep his balance, and the bomb dropped taking the closed bay doors with it. A crewman who saw what happened yelled 'Bombs away', and the plane lurched upward about 1,000 feet, having lost so much weight. The bomb landed in an uninhabited area 4.5 miles south of the Kirtland control tower. The non-nuclear explosives in the bomb detonated on impact, killing a cow, but the nuclear device itself failed to go off. Let's hope such systems failure will operate when the fiendish devices are dropped intentionally! San Francisco *Chronicle* 30 Aug 1986.

A FRUSTRATED SUTTEE

Mrs Jaswant Singh, 45, widow of Ganpat Singh, announced that the 'divine urge' was upon her. She would dress in the gaudy finery of a Rajput village bride and commit suttee - the ancient but outlawed practice of a widow joining her husband on his funeral pyre. To the blare and thump of a brass band, 50,000 vividly clad and chanting men and women followed the Singhs to the cremation ground beside the river Triveni, between Jaipur and Delhi. The suttee took her place on the pyre with her husband's head cradled in her lap. As the Indian newspaper, *The Statesman* (14 Mar 1985), explained: suttee "evokes great veneration from the devout. It ensures a place in the local legends and confers a sort of immortality." In 1979, a widow from a neighbouring village immolated herself. The village instantly became a cenre of pilgrimage, complete with temples and a souvenir shop, visited daily by hundreds of believers.

Mrs Singh reckoned without the presence of mind of a young district magistrate, whose squad of 50 policemen were no match for the ecstatic throng. "If she is really a suttee," he said, "let the pyre light by itself." The widow announced that the pyre would light by spontaneous combustion at 5 pm. An increasingly restive crowd waited for two hours. The flames

did not arrive, but police reinforcements did. As they went to drag the widow down, they were pelted with holy coconut offerings, and retaliated with teargas and warning shots. Hundreds were hurt in the stampede.

When a *Hindustan Times* reporter visited the frustrated martyr back in her village, he found her intoning "Om Shiva, Om Shiva" to the evident approval of about 50 women, who told him: "Now she will never eat or drink anything again." One suggested that he might like to lay an offering at the feet of the "living suttee." *Guardian* 15 Mar 1985.

AN INGENIOUS PLOT

A rich widow of 81, Catherine Noodyke, 4 foot 10 inches tall, met dashing 6-foot-tall Neal Faasen, 44, in Chicago in 1980, and a few months later they were married. Her life turned into a nightmare after she began sharing all her worldly goods with her husband. Crazy voices would babble in the pre-dawn darkness. Household objects such as cutlery, carpets and rugs would move on thier own, as if by unseen hands. She thought she was going insane. After five years of marriage, Faasen dumped his wife on a relative's doorstep, having fleeced her of over two million dollars. A court action was brought by her family, accusing Faasen of fraud. It was claimed that he had engineered all the strange effects to drive his wife insane, in an eerie reenactment of the Victorian melodramatic story, *Gaslight*. Objects were allegedly moved by translucent fishing lines, and people hired to whisper and laugh outside his wife's bedroom.

Perhaps some clipper out there can furnish us with the information. *Sunday Express* 25 Aug 1985.

Paul Sieveking

PIGEONS FOOLED

After all but five of 500 homing pigeons released last August failed to return to their lofts, Swedish pigeon-fanciers were told that fall-out from Chernobyl had scrambled their birds' brains. Experts hypothesized that radioactivity had altered the magnetic 'maps' by which the birds are thought to navigate, causing them to become lost. Migratory species may also be affected, says *The Scotsman* (8 Aug 1986). We wonder about that odd little 1% immunity though.

Bees navigate to pollen-bearing flowers by spotting miniature 'landing lights' sported on leaves and petals. Researchers at Kew Gardens examining plants under electron microscopes have discovered that they bear thousands of tiny 'optical cells' which act as reflectors and project light into the bees' eyes. *D.Mail* 17 Sept 1986.

ROYAL ROOTS

The British Royal family was twice revealed to have interesting blood lines last year.

◄ First came the revelation that the Queen is a descendant of the prophet Mohammed. *Burke's Peerage* publisher, Harold Brooks-Baker, said the connection with the founder of Islam came via the marriages between the Arab kings of Spain with the families of the kings of Castille and Portugal, and through them to England's 15th century King Edward IV. *D.Mirror,* Wolverhampton *Express & Star* 10 Oct 1986. Exactly how this effects the Queen's role as head of the Church of England we can't say, but all those crusaders who fought the Saracens must be revolving in their tombs.

◄ Then came the news that Princess Michael - called 'Princess Pushy' by the media because of her indiscretions - was a descendant of the original 'Dracula'. Hugh Peskett, a respected genealogist who has worked for Debrett's and for Burke's, was reacting to the Princess' claims that she was from a "good Catholic family" and that she was "more royal than the Royals". Peskett said her father - Baron von Reibnitz, recently exposed as a Nazi - only joined the Catholic Church with his first marriage "and then divorced three times, which doesn't exactly fit in with the Catholic faith." The Baron's title was a gift of the King of Prussia, who "handed out titles willy-nilly. Her mother is from better breeding, but that's only half an aristocracy," said Peskett. But the real eyebrow-curler is that Peskett's research shows that the Princess' father's line goes back distinctly to the notorious Vlad the Impaler (d1476), who was in turn "a great grandson seven generations removed" of Genghis Khan!

Peskett said later, that "Almost all the aristocracy in that part of the world can be traced back to Vlad the Impaler," and "Even the Queen is descended from that line through her grandmother, Queen Mary." A spokesman at Buckingham Palace said: "We would not wish to comment on any of this." *News of the World* 28 Dec; Portsmouth *News* 30 Dec 1986.

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Science Frontiers

Compiled & Annotated by William R.Corliss.

MENTAL CONTROL OF ALLERGIES

Abstract - "Most of the effort directed at understanding the problems of allergy has focused on the interacting components of the immune system. The possibility that histamine may be released as a learned response has now been tested. In a classical conditioning procedure in which an immunologic challenge was paired with the presentation of an odor, guinea pigs showed a plasma histamine increase when presented with the odor alone. This suggests that the immune response can be enhanced through activity of the central nervous system."

The article notes that many anecdotal reports suggest that allergic reactions can be induced by suggestion; viz., an allergy to roses induced by an artificial rose. (Russell, M, et al; 'Learned Histamine Release,' *Science*, 225:733, 1984.)

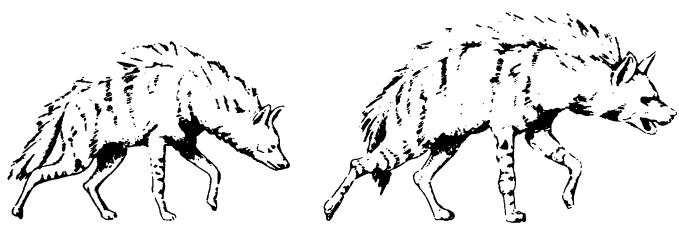
CHECKING OUT THOSE AUSTRALIAN PYRAMIDS

Several Australian readers have been kind enough to send this item about the Australian pyramids (see **FT46 p67**) especially at Gympie, Queensland. The article's author, T.Wheeler, personally checked out the Gympie pyramid, the other supposedly ancient artifacts found in the area, and the testimonies of authorities and old-timers in the Gympie area. His results:

"What are we left with? The facts are (probably) that the Gympie 'Golden' pyramid is actually an ordinary hill terraced by early Italian immigrants for viniculture that has been disfigured by erosion and the removal of stone from the retaining walls for use elsewhere; the stone wall around Gympie's Surface Hill Uniting Church is exactly what the Rev.Mr Geddes says it is, a wall made from irregular, freshly quarried stone. The 'Gympie Iron Man' statue was carved by a Chinese gold prospector and later abandoned. The sun symbol and snakes were carved quite recently. The prickly pear was introduced to Australia, by early settlers from South America. As for the supporting statements by the various authorities, all but a few unimportant ones fade away as one after another proves to be a misquote, a falsification or an outright fabrication." (Wheeler, Tony; 'In Quest of Australia's Lost Pyramids' *Omega Science Digest* p22, Nov/Dec 1985.)

THE PANDA LOOK-ALIKE PROBLEM

The giant and lesser pandas have long been grouped together because they look very similar externally. Furthermore, their tooth and skull structures are very much alike. Recent comparisons of chromosomes, DNA sequences, and protein characteristics have indicated that the giant panda is really a bear, but the lesser panda is a racoon. The question remains, why they are similar in so many ways. ('Panda pedigree: Giant or Lesser,' *Science News* 128:216, 1985.) Mimicry doesn't seem to play a role here, as it does in the case of the hyena/aardwolf (**below**).



This illustration - from *Incredible Life* (Sourcebook Project, 1981) - compares hyena (**right**) with the smaller, weaker aardwolf (**left**) whose mimicry probably protects it from predators who would shy away from the powerful hyena.

BRAIN ARCHITECTURE BEYOND GENES

"The human brain probably contains more than 10^{14} synapses, and there are simply not enough genes to account for this complexity." .. "Neuroscientists at a recent meeting high-lighted how extragenetic factors - including neuronal activity, contact with other cells, radiation, and chemical factors - influence brain circuitry, especially during development." In computer terms, our brains are constantly reprogramming themselves in response to internal and external forces. (Barnes, Deborah M., 'Brain architecture: Beyond genes,' *Science* 233:155, 1986.) Musing in a Lamarckian way: can the brain, as reprogrammed by external factors, ever feed back information to the genes?

UNDERGROUND WEATHER

Most residents of central Oregon can tell you tales about winds blowing out of the ground, about roaring and whistling sounds emanating from their wells, and of mysterious holes in the winter snow on Mount Bachelor. Central Oregon is geologically young and plastered with lava flows and cinder cones. It is like a sponge, with many cubic miles of holes, air channels and open fissures. The air in this rocky sponge is

usually on the move in response to changes in atmospheric pressure. The earth absorbs air during barometric highs and expels it during lows. In some spots the expelled air is captured to cool homes during the summer.

In the High Cascades, though, the underground winds present hazards to skiers by creating blow-holes in the snow. These blowholes are actually mildly anomalous because they blow out a gentle 40°F breeze *regardless* of the barometric pressure. Some of Oregon's blowing caves also 'breathe' without regard to the barometric pressure outside. Also, water wells north of Fort Rock Basin often blow for days during periods of high pressure, when they should be taking in air. (Larry Chitwood, 'Central Oregon's underground world filled with wind that roars, whistles,' *The Oregonian* 31 October 1985 - Cr: R.Byrd.)

THE CHROMOSOME GAP

"Compared with the chromosomes of humans and other great apes, the pygmy chimpanzee's chromo-somes are...the *most* specialised - they have changed more over time than have the others." "Surprisingly," Stanyon and his colleagues conclude, "the human karyotype (chromosome complement) is the most conservative... It has more unchanged ancestral chromosomes." ('Chromosomes show apes 'More evolved' than Man,' *New Scientist* p24, 17 July 1986.)

EXPLAINING THE NAZCA LINES

The Nazca lines of Peru have been one of archaeology's more enduring anomalies. Books have been devoted to them; theories abound; can any more be said?

A.F.Aveni's recent article in *Archaeology* sets the lines in perspective and adds some new observations. First: Aveni deflates their mystery a bit. You do not have to be in an airplane to appreciate the lines: most can be viewed from ground level or, even better, from nearby foothills. Although there are some 1,300 Km of lines and about 300 geomet-ric figures, their construction did not really involve much labour or special engi-neering skills. Even so, the Nazca lines *are* remarkable, and we really do not know why they were etched on the Peruvian pampa.

In his research on the lines, Aveni noted early their strong similarity to the *ceque* system of 41 imaginary straight lines radiating outwards from the Inca's Temple of the Sun at Cuzco, the 'navel' of the Inca universe. "... the ceque system was a highly ordered hierarchical cosmographical map, a mnemonic scheme that incorporated virtually all important matters connected with the Inca world-view." Could the Nazca lines have been a forerunner of the ceque system? Aveni also noticed that the Nazca lines and geometrical figures were closely related to water-courses. Also, many of the lines definitely functioned as footpaths. It was also apparent that the animals figures, which were laid down much earlier than the line systems, were not related conceptually to the line scheme.

Aveni concludes: "... whatever the final answer may be to the mystery of the Nazca lines, this much is certain: the pampa is not a confused and meaningless maze of lines, and it was no more intended to be viewed from the air than an Iowa wheatfield. The lines and line centres give evidence of a great deal of order, and the well-entrenched concept of radiality offers affinities between the ceque system of Cuzco and the pampa lines. All the clues point to a ritual scheme involving water, irrigation and planting; but as we might expect of these ancient cultures, elements of astronomy and calendar were also evident." (Aveni, Anthony F., 'The Nazca lines: Patterns in the desert,' *Archaeology* 39:33, August 1986.)

GEOMAGNETICISM AND POLTERGEIST ACTIVITY

"**Summary**: Several researchers have reported that poltergeist episodes frequently began on the day - ± 1 day - of a sudden and intense increase in global geomagnetic activity. To test this visual observation, a near-complete account of these episodes for which the inception dates were recorded and verified was examined. Statistical samples clearly indicated that global geomagnetic activity (the AA index) on the day or day after the onset of these episodes was significantly higher than the geomagnetic activity on the days before or afterwards. The same temporal pattern was noted for historical cases and for those that have occurred more recently. The pattern was similar for episodes that occurred in North America and Europe. The results were statistically significant and suggest that these unusual episodes may be some form of natural phenomena that are associated with geophy-sical factors." (Gearhart, Livingston, and Persinger, M.A., 'Geophysical variables and behaviour XXXIII: Onsets of historical and contemporary poltergeist epi-sodes occurred with sudden increases in geomagnetic activity,' *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 62:463, 19E3.) To put this interesting item in perspective, one must realise that few established scientists recognise the reality of poltergeists.

Science Frontiers is extracted from William Corliss' bimonthly collection of digests from current literature, which is sent free to regular customers of his publication and book service. For details write to **The Sourcebook Project, Box 107, Glen Arm, MD 21057, USA.**

THE EYES HAVE IT!

by Bob Skinner.

In the past, bodily deformities were often explained as having resulted from the effects on the foetus of a mother's imagination or emotions during pregnancy. Joseph Merrick, the Elephant Man, for instance believed that his deformity was due to the fact that his mother had been frightened by an elephant during the time she was pregnant with him.

Much the same kind of interpretation may have been put on the strange instances of persons having images in their eyes.

The first reference to this rare phenomenon is with regard to the case of Henry Kens, who was born in Leford, Holland, in about 1693. From his birth it was said that inscriptions could be seen in his eyes: around the light grey iris of his left eye could be read the Latin words 'DEUS MEUS' (My God), and around the other the word 'ELOHIM' (God) in Hebrew characters.

The opportunity this provided his parents for making money was not missed, and during his childhood they exhibited their attractive fair-haired son all over the Continent. According to a handbill produced in London, when he was first exhibited at the "Golden Lyon" in the Strand, he had "now been seen by most of the Kings and Princes of Europe, being now brought from France, where he was strangely admired by the learn'd and curious." **[4]**

John Evelyn, the diarist, appears to have been one of them. "Everyone went to see him, physicians and philosophers examined him with great accuracy," he wrote in April 1701; "some considered it as artificial, others as almost supernatural." **[9]**

On the Continent too, the inscriptions in the boy's eyes had been "considered a prodigious miracle." **[8]** The phenomenon was said to have been "looked upon as the immediate finger of God, and made great use of against infidels" **[5],** whatever that might have involved!

The possible prophetic or symbolic significance of the marvel was not overlooked when Henry Kens was brought to England, as "when he was in London there was a solemn deputation from the synagogue of the Jews sent to enquire into the pedigree of the boy, in hopes to have found him to have been the Messiah." **[5]** One assumes that the deputation went away disappointed.

What did others make of the supposed inscriptions? Rev. Charles Ellis, who saw the boy in Brussels in July 1699, wrote a description to his friend Dr. Edward Tyson: "On nicely surveying it, I could perceive it was only the iris of the eye, not circularly joined, but lashed out into fimbriae, which here and there might be thought to form some imaginary letters, as beginning at the lachrymal corner of the left eye. There is something like a D, and I, and V, but not a trace for the strongest fancy to work out any more, nor any letter of Hebrew in the right eye, as they pretended. I do not doubt, but as the boy grows up, the others may conjoin again." **[8]**

Despite this apparently negative assessment, the boy continued to be exhibited, and when seen some 7 or 8 years later in London by James Paris du Plessis, he was described as having "extraordinary good sight, and had a circle upon each eye at a little distance from the ball or centre of each eye, whereupon there was plain to be read in fair characters, like prints, Deus Meus. As he grew bigger, the characters grew larger and more legible." **[11]**

Not long afterwards, in 1732, it is recorded that a French girl was being exhibited as having inscriptions in her eyes. The 9-year-old daughter of a sieve-maker of Chateford, she was said to have been born with what appeared to be a Latin inscription "round the sight of her eye, exactly resembling that upon a French crown, viz. LUD.XV.D.G.FR.ET NAV.REX." The news of this phenomenon reached the highest levels of society, and the girl was presented to King Louis XV at Marly, near Versailles, "as a great curiosity and a wonderful *lusus naturae*." **[3]**

From France again, the case of a woman living at Buch, near Versailles, was reported in February 1764. Since birth, it was said, the iris of her eyes had appeared to be divided into twelve sections "forming an exact dial, the figures resembling those on the small watches that are included in rings to wear on the finger." **[1]**

In 1828, a third French girl, aged about 2 or 3 years, was exhibited in London at the Bazaar in Oxford Street. Her eyes were pale blue, and it was claimed that on the left iris could be seen the inscription 'NAPOLEON EMPEREUR', on the right 'EMPEREUR NAPOLEON'. This remarkable effect was explained as resulting from the pre-natal influence on the child of its mother having stared at a franc-piece from the time of Napoleon, which had been given to her by her brother before a long absence.

According to the correspondent to a contemporary magazine, who went to see the girl, "all the letters are not equally visible, the commencement NAP and EMP being the most distinct. The colour of the letters is almost white, and at first sight they appear like rays, which make the eyes appear vivacious and sparkling. The accuracy of the inscriptions is much assisted by the stillness of the eye, on it being directed upwards..., and with this aid the several letters may be traced with the naked eye... Our contemporaries are, we perceive, somewhat divided as to the distinctness of the inscription; but we have given our opinion fairly - and as the proverb runs, seeing is believing." **[2]**

Rev. C.W.Bingham recalled how, when aged 18, he had examined the girl at the Oxford Street Bazaar in 1828, and his conclusions were put in a letter written at the time: "I can unhesitatingly affirm that the whole thing is a humbug. With a highly-powered magnifying-glass I examined both her eyes for at least a quarter of an hour, in every possible light. I had pictures and models of her eyes shown me, that I might know where to find the respective letters. Not one could I see!... I tried to fancy the inscriptions; but it would not do; there

were not materials to fancy even a syllable. Others, I should suppose, must have been deceived by their imagination for there can hardly be any room for doubt in a matter of this kind, where a person of quick eyesight cannot discover a letter after long examination. The child has a pale blue eye, with those light strokes so often seen in blue eyes, very strongly marked, and this is the natural circumstance which has won from English credulity the fortune of the child and its parents."

On reflection on the case, he added "whether I was too incredulous, or others too credulous, I must not pronounce." **[6]**

Another writer commenting on the case wrote: "Many of the impostures practised on the public pass without exposure simply because the few who detect the fraud do not think it worth while to undeceive the many, who believe just what they are told to believe. Thus it happened in the case of the child exhibited some years ago... The tissue of the human iris is made up of a multitude of fibres, interlaced one with another, and interspersed with minute dots and tufts of a dark coloured substance termed 'pigment', which varies very much in different persons, both to colour and quantity. Those who have a light grey or bluish iris often exhibit irregular markings near the edge of the pupil, which a lively imagination may easily resolve into letters. Such I suppose to have been the case with the French girl." The same author also proposed that if the eyes had been viewed through a tube "a little ingenuity would suffice to make printed letters, reflected in a concealed mirror, appear to the spectator to be actually upon the surface of the eye...!" **[10]**

As in the case of Henry Kens, whatever the views of the sceptics, the girl became something of a celebrity, being examined not only by Sir Astley Cooper and other leading members of the medical profession, but also, it appears, being shown to King George IV. **[2]**

There are several features of these reports of interest. Note, for instance, the religious and political interpretations that were placed on the so-called inscriptions. This doubtless reflected the contemporary concerns and interests in society. The Continental origin of these four cases may have some significance. The repeated mention of the interest of Royalty is another feature in these curious accounts, but perhaps it is explainable by the general interest in all types of human freaks and prodigies of the time.

It would be easy to dismiss this phenomenon as the result of human imagination and gullibility in the observation of unusually formed or coloured irises, promoted primarily by those who stood to gain financially. The cases discussed all occurred before the age of photography, and there is no way now of deciding the merits of any of the claims.

However, it is interesting to note that there is at least one example of an account of the phenomenon from the present century, showing some similarities with the cases already discussed.

In 1951 it was reported that a nineteen-month-old blue-eyed boy, Peter Jacobs of Heidelberg, Transvaal, South Africa, showed the letters of the alphabet on the iris of his left eye, and the numbers 1 to 12 on the right. His foster mother, Mrs. D.S.Jacobs, was quoted as saying: "The markings are getting more distinct every week. Many times I have been able to see all twenty-six letters imprinted in the left eye. The numbers in his right iris look as though they have been carved by expert craftsmen."

What were the reactions to this claim? Much the same as in other instances: it is said that "neighbours thought the markings were the signs of a miracle. Johannesburg eye specialists believe that they have been formed by a billion-to-one chance in breaking up of the eye pigment." **[11]**

It would be fascinating to know whether Peter Jacobs still bears those strange marks in his eyes, or whether they were all just 'in the eyes of the beholder'.

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THE YETI:
PHOTOGRAPHED, AT LAST!

On the 6th of March last year (1986) Anthony Wooldridge met what in all probability was a yeti, during a solo 200-mile run in the Garhwal Himalaya of North India for the charity organization Traidcraft, which supports self-help projects in developing countries. He explains: "The run allowed me to combine my interests in long distance running and mountaineering and obtain first-hand knowledge of the way of life in the mountain villages. I have no special training in zoology and when I undertook the run, I knew very little about the yeti." The full story of how Tony (34) - who lives near Manchester, and works as a researcher for the Central Electricity Generating Board in the Greater Manchester area - took what may turn out to be the first photographs of the long-disputed creature will be told in a moment in his own words.

I have met Tony and was very impressed with his sincerity, conviction and intelligence, seasoned with just the right amount of scepticism to ask all the right questions, both of his own experience and of the comments of those 'experts' whom he approached for an opinion on his return to England. Tony's compassionate nature - evident in the reason why he was in the Himalayas - was further revealed by his concern for the creature he unexpectedly encountered, choosing not to reveal details of the incident until he could do so to those who would study it 'properly', for fear of inspiring a hunt and media circus which might itself endanger a lifeform already shy and rare.

My own advice to Tony was to submit his photographic and narrative testimony to as many 'experts' as possible - especially to the International Society of Cryptozoology (ISC) **[1]** - and not to be too daunted by any critical or even hostile reactions. Tony says: "My conviction that the creature in question was a yeti is based on a subsequent detailed study of other reports and on discussions with experts on this topic." He submitted a full report to the ISC in October 1986, which will be printed in the next issue of their journal *Cryptozoology*, and which was summarised (with an overview of the whole yeti question) by Richard Greenwell in the *ISC Newsletter* v5:#4 (Winter 1986). These form our main sources for the account which follows, although we must mention a creditable article in *BBC Wildlife* **[2]** which was the first full colour printing of Tony's photos in the UK, along with the comments of Professors Robert Martin and John Napier. Tony's story begins on the next page:

Tony Wooldridge with photos taken during his fateful charity run in the Garhwal Himalaya. [© *AM Weekend.*]

TONY WOOLDRIDGE'S ENCOUNTER

"Between March 2 and March 10, 1986, I completed a solo run in the upper Alaknanda Valley [see map]. Although I carried an ice axe and full survival equipment in my 8Kg rucksack, my strategy was to use the accommodation available in the main villages, and so avoid the need to bivouac. Both Hindu and Sikh pilgrims visit the area in the summer, but at this time of the year all villages higher than about 2000 metres are locked up and deserted. "

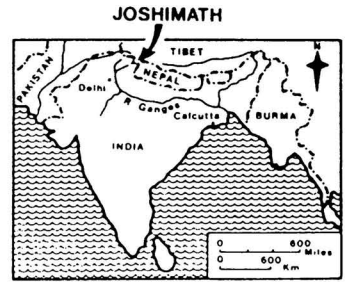
"On March 5, I left Joshimath early, ran easily up the valley as far as Govind Ghat and then turned off up the Bhiundar Valley. That afternoon I reached an altitude of about 3000 metres and found the bungalows at Gangaria closed and deserted. There were boot-marks in the snow as far as the bungalows but they continued no further. I cached my ice axe and survival bag in the snow and set off back to the Sikh gurudwara at Govind Ghat for the night. My plan was to stock up with food, get a good night's sleep and return as early as possible the next morning to reach Hemkund whilst the snow was in reasonable condition. By the time I reached Govind Ghat I had covered 50Km with about 1860 metres of ascent since the morning."

"On March 6, I left the Sikh gurudwara just after 6am, and although I had been told that the route to Hemkund was impassable because of ice, I was determined to see for myself. At Pulna, the last inhabited village (1920 metres), I inquired about a local guide willing to come up to Hemkund, but could find no-one who would risk the icy conditions and possibility of a chilly bivouac. Their reticence did not inspire confidence in my chances of reaching Hemkund alone, but at least I could travel more rapidly unaccompanied and was prepared to spend a night out if it proved necessary."

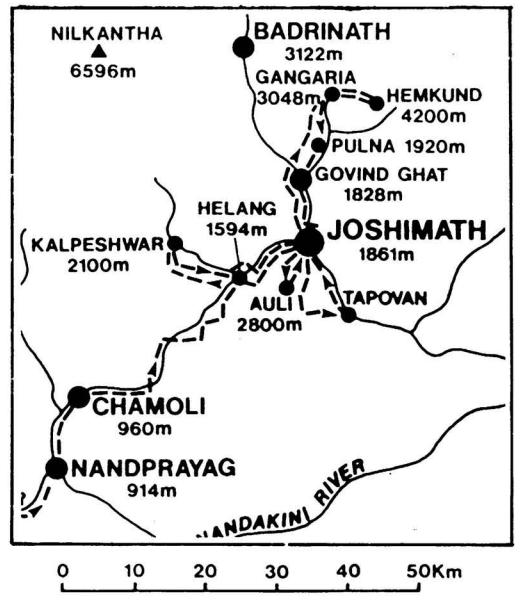
"I ran most of the way up the valley until I reached the snow at about 2800 metres, and reached the huts at Gangaria (3048 metres) by 10am. Beyond Gangaria I could just discern the track leading off up towards Hemkund, but there were no signs of anyone else having used the route since the last snowfall, and probably since the previous Autumn. There had only been a light frost overnight and with the sun thawing the thin surface crust of snow I was soon sinking in above the tops of my training shoes."

"As the track climbed up steep wooded slopes, I was surprised (around 3300 metres) to come across an area where the snow had recently been disturbed. Strange tracks came up a steep gully on the right and then went from bush to bush in the wood [see photo **right**]. I was naturally curious to know what creature could be sharing the wood with me, but could think of no satisfactory explanation. I took two quick photographs of the tracks **[2]** and pressed on knowing that time was precious if I was to reach Hemkund before the snow became too soft. Perhaps half an hour later, as I was emerging above the tree-line, there was a sudden bang followed by protracted rumbling, and although I could see no signs of snow movement, my first reaction was to suspect an avalanche."

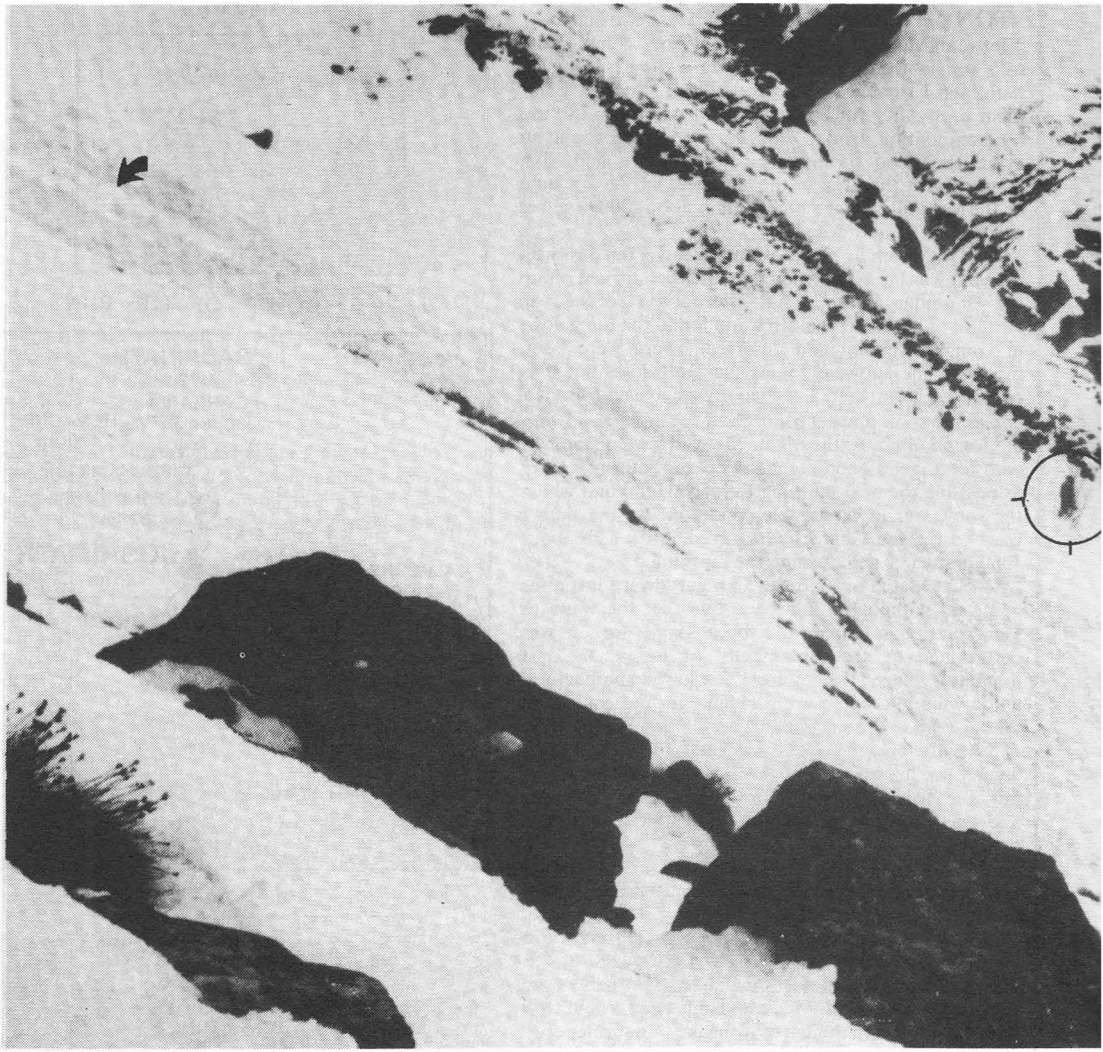
"By 12:30 I had reached about 3800 metres; my



---►--- ROUTE OF THE RUN

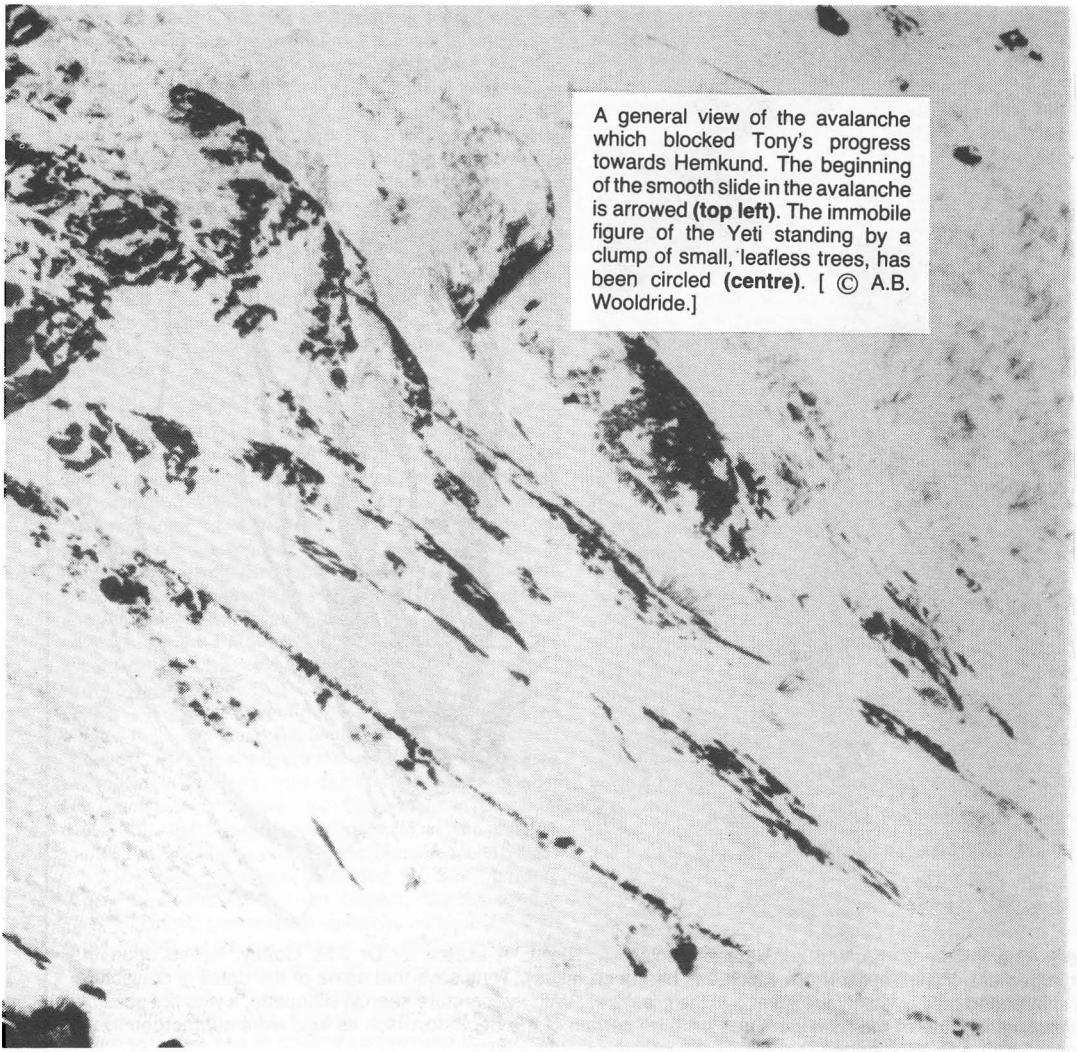


The heavy tracks that Tony encountered just above Gangaria. [© A.B. Wooldridge.]



route left the comparative shelter of the cliffs and continued across an exposed steep snow slope. I became increasingly concerned about the stability of the snow and was soon dismayed and worried to see that a recent wet snow avalanche extended right across my intended route [see photo **above**]. I continued for a few hundred yards to get a better position to survey the obstacle and assess the risks of proceeding. Whilst studying the track of the debris I noticed a large smooth groove in the loose snow which might have been caused by a large rock sliding down. But the groove came to an abrupt halt just at the point where a set of tracks led off across the slope, behind and beyond a spindly shrub. Standing behind the shrub was a large, erect shape, perhaps up to 2 metres tall. Convinced that whatever it was it would disappear quickly, I took several photographs rapidly and then moved up about 50 metres nearer to a rocky outcrop, which was as close as I could get without venturing onto the broad, open snow slope which had just avalanched."

"It was difficult to restrain my excitement as I came to the realisation that the only animal I could think of, which remotely resembled this one in front of me, was the yeti. My scepticism about the creature's existence was overturned by this all-too-real creature, standing with its legs apart, apparently looking down the slope with its right shoulder towards me. Its head was large and squarish and the whole body appeared to be covered in dark hair, although the upper arm was a slightly lighter colour. The creature was amazingly good at remaining motionless although the bush vibrated once or twice, and when I moved back down to lower ground it appeared to have changed the position of its head, looking more directly at me."

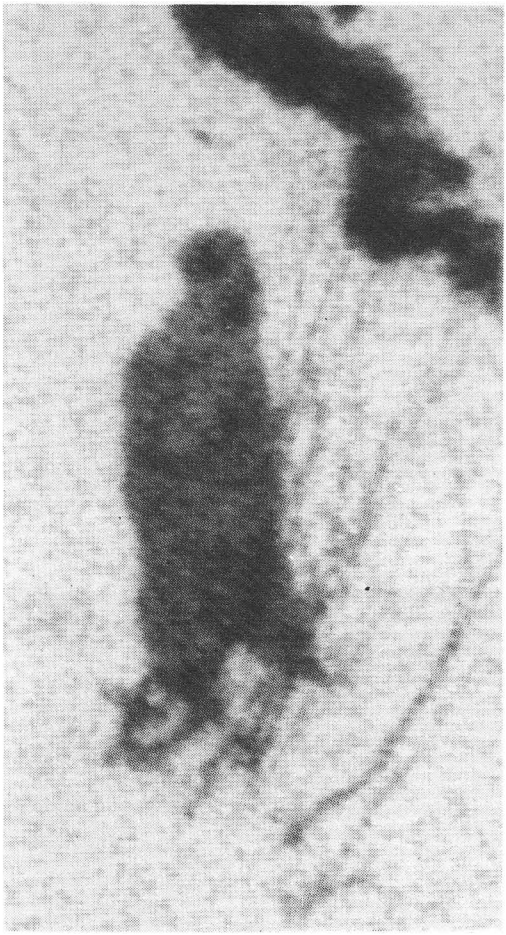


A general view of the avalanche which blocked Tony's progress towards Hemkund. The beginning of the smooth slide in the avalanche is arrowed **(top left)**. The immobile figure of the Yeti standing by a clump of small, leafless trees, has been circled **(centre)**. [© A.B. Wooldride.]

"I took a number of photographs from an estimated range of 150 metres [see **above**]. At the time I was completely unaware that no-one had ever photographed a yeti before, but I knew the pictures would be of great interest - provided that I got back safely. What a pity I had only a light compact camera with a slightly wide angle 35mm focus lens. At least, being a Nikon, the lens was of sufficient quality for the negatives to withstand considerable enlargement [see next page **(p42)**]."

"After about 45 minutes the animal still showed no sign of moving, although the shrub had vibrated slightly once or twice. I moved back down the slope slightly and gained the impression that the animal was now peering towards me around the other side of the shrub, but its feet had not changed their position. It was now about 1:30pm and with the weather deteriorating fast, I felt it was time to get down before the new light snowfall obliterated my tracks. On the way down I kept a keen look-out for any further tracks and noticed a considerable number on the slopes between the avalanchee debris and the place where I had earlier seen the footprints in the wood. It was pretty clear that the animal had been looking for food from bushes in the wood and then on the open slopes above the trees. Perhaps it had been disturbed by my arrival in the valley, had made off over-hastily towards Hemkund and triggered off the avalanchee."

"Back in the wood I came across the footprints which I had photographed some three hours earlier, but they had already melted severely in the intervening time. I photographed them as best I could, remembering to include my ice axe in the photograph for a scale. The sky was now completely overcast and the snow



Left: The image of the Yeti considerably enlarged. **Right:** A sketch by Dr J.M. Coffey, based upon the enlargement. In his report (from which this has been taken), Tony says that some of the detail is conjectural and intended only to clarify the stance of the creature. "With the creature seen in silhouette, it was not possible to distinguish any of the facial features or to be certain of the depth to which its legs were submerged in the snow." [© A.B. Wooldridge.]

looked set to last some time so I was reluctant to bivouac at Gangaria. I was torn between a strong desire to stay in the Bhiundar Valley for another day and the need to maintain the schedule of my sponsored run. Since the yeti was very likely to flee over the col towards Hemkund that afternoon and the footprints would be obscured by the recent snow, it was very doubtful whether much new evidence could be gleaned the following day."

"By 4:30pm I was back down to Pulna, and I reached the main road to Joshimath by 5pm. Not stopping as I passed a man brewing tea in the hut near the road, I made record time down toward Vishnu Prayag, covering the 9Km in 40 minutes. It was well dark by the time I finished the climb up to Joshimath, and I staggered in to the Tourist Resthouse to find the manager sitting in his usual chair near the entrance. He was rather amazed to learn the distance I had travelled that day and particularly that I had ventured towards Hemkund without a guide. I had covered a distance of about 58Km and ascended a total of nearly 3000 metres. I would have loved to tell him a full account of my experiences that day, but I had already decided that rather than risk a hunt being set up for the animal I would keep the news to myself until the proper authorities in India and elsewhere had been consulted."

"Returning to England on March 15, my spare time was spent reporting on the sponsored run whilst consulting in comparative secrecy with zoologists, anthropologists and mountaineers about the yeti **[3]**. The news of my encounter was first released on the BBC TV programme *Wild Britain* on July 13, and fully reported in *BBC Wildlife* magazine. **[2]**"

In an earlier, unpublished version of the report **[4]**

Tony concluded: "It will be intriguing to see whether this new evidence influences the prevailing scepticism among scientists about the yeti's existence. I have sympathy with these doubts, particularly as I shared them myself until so recently. What is important is that evidence which points to the yeti's existence (or otherwise) should be faithfully reported by those visiting remote mountain areas of Asia. Collation and scientific study of this evidence by those suitably qualified may then lead to real progress. What one should not do is attempt to convince the sceptics by setting out to capture the animal, or even worse, to kill it." Tony also expressed his hope that "the Indian government, perhaps with the help of the World Wildlife Fund, might consider this enough evidence to give the animal protection.

SOME REACTIONS

The reactions to Tony's testimony have been varied, and Tony himself writes: "A number of experts believe that the creature is probably a yeti; others prefer to keep an open mind." Robert D. Martin, professor of Physical Anthropology at University College, London, approached for his opinion by *BBC Wildlife*, wrote at length, comparing the apparent features of the 'yeti' with the physiology of the Hanuman langur (*Presbytis entellus*) of which 20Kg specimens had been caught in Central Nepal. However, although he calls this identification "the most reasonable interpretation", Prof. Martin admits that it does leave "a few puzzling details". Firstly, the creature Tony observed was much bigger than the accepted upper limit for a langur. Secondly, there is no sign of the langur's distinctive long tail in the photographs, nor did Tony see a hint of one. He concludes: "There is, therefore, a marginal possibility that a large-bodied primate as yet undocumented by zoologists inhabits the Himalayas." (p426).

The other comment obtained by *BBC Wildlife* comes from Professor John Napier, the anatomist, anthropologist, and leading authority on primates who gained some academic respect for the study of the 'abominable snowman' through his pragmatic book *Bigfoot* (1973). Prof. Napier admits that the "remarkable but quite logical" effect upon him of Tony's evidence was to reverse his previous scepticism. He writes: "In my view, the creature in the photograph is a hominid. There is a remote possibility that the figure is that of a Sadhu - a holy man or hermit - and therefore *Homo sapiens*, but in my view it is not *human* in the general sense of the word, although it may belong to the genus *Homo*. Napier then describes the similarity in appearance with one a Soviet hydrologist made of an 'alma' at the Fedchenko Glacier in the Karakoram Mountains. Although he was disappointed with the unreliability of the photographs of the tracks in melting snow, he mentions two points which particularly helped make up his mind. "1) Wooldridge's own opinion is expressed so lucidly and convincingly that you cannot help being impressed. After many years of doubt and part-disbelief, I am now a yeti-devotee. 2) The creature cannot be anything but a yeti - it is obviously neither a langur (this has a long tail and no upright posture of the human variety) nor a bear (legs too long, muzzle absent) - unless we wish to invent a mysterious animal that is being mistaken for another mysterious animal!" (p426.)

Dr Brian Bertrand, curator of mammals at London Zoo - who was understandably cautious, probably because "he was shown the photographs just before April 1st!" - "could suggest no known mammal which could be confused with the animal in the photographs and, in particular, he felt it could not be a bear." Archeologist Dr Myra Shackley, author of *Wildman: Yeti, Sasquatch and the Neanderthal enigma* (1983) told Tony that she believe this new evidence "was consistent with other reports of yeti sightings." John Hunt, leader of the successful 1953 Mount Everest Expedition, who has twice seen yeti tracks himself, was "fascinated" while "maintaining a strong desire that nothing be done to prejudice the animal's well being and particularly that there be no attempt to capture it."

Zoologist Dr Desmond Morris proposed the possible explanations of an unknown bear or monkey, or perhaps a recluse (Sadhu), and a yeti. According to Tony, Morris "had some difficulty in accepting any of these alternatives, but regards the yeti to be somewhat more plausible than the others." Chris Bonnington, the mountaineer, who shared the BBC TV programme with Tony, "is of a similar belief." In an addendum to his field report in *Cryptozoology,* Tony, who had observed troops of langurs at lower elevations, which "could not be confused with the large animal I saw", says: "I discount the idea of a langur monkey or bear, and consider the possibility of the figure being human to be a less plausible explanation than the proposition of an unknown hominoid or hominid - the yeti." He said he found it "difficult to imagine" a human "getting involved in an avalanchee and then standing nearly motionless for about 45 minutes observing a fellow human."

An enlargement of the yeti was digitally enhanced using computer facilities at UKAEA Harwell, but without improving substantially on the conventially processed image, due, it seems, to the inability of such processes to deal with minute details almost equivalent in size to the grains of the photographic emulsion. In general, Tony's evidence has rekindled serious interest in the yeti, and we are hoping for further excitements. [See also YETI NEWS, on p29.]

"For the time being," concludes Tony, "I prefer to reflect on H.W. Tilman's eloquent statement, in his book *Mount Everest, 1938*: 'When the dust of conflict had settled, the 'Abominable Snowman' survived to pursue his evasive, mysterious, terrifying existence, unruffled as the snow he treads, unmoved as the mountains in which he dwells, uncaught, unspecified, but not unhonoured.'"

Bob Rickard

NOTES

■ **1** - International Society of Cryptozoology: Box 43070, Tucson, AZ 85733, USA. ■ **2** - David Helton, 'The creature from the avalanchee', *BBC Wildlife* v4:#9 (Sept 1986), pp422-426. ■ **3** - In particular, Tony had discussions with Lord Hunt, Chris Bonnington, Dr Myra Shackley, and Dr Brian Bertram. ■ **4** - A.B. Wooldridge, 'Best evidence yeti', (20 May 1986).

ACCIDENTAL DEATH OF AN ANTI-CHRIST

by Mike Dash.

The shade of Dr Margaret Murray still retains the power to arouse strong emotions among historians, anthropologists and even forteans. A quarter of a century after her death at the age of 100, Murray's theoretical reconstruction of an enduring 'Old Religion' in Britain - surviving the alleged Christianisation of the country by a thousand years and retaining the faith of its people until stamped out in the witchcraft persecution of the 15th-17th centuries - remains controversial.

Murray's hypothesis, elaborated in a pair of books **[1-2]**, is far too complex to admit of full examination here, but one aspect in particular has interested forteans. Dr Murray maintains that many British kings were adherents of the Old Religion, worshipping nature and regarded by their people as a sort of demi-god whose strength and vigour was directly proportional to the state of the harvest. Any decline in the monarch's powers could be disasterous, and Murray follows Fraser's *The Golden Bough* in suggesting a seven year sacrificial cycle designed to maintain the fertility of the land. The septennial killing of either the king or a suitably high-ranking substitute can, she argues, be traced in the course of British history. Murray's list of victims is a long one, but the most famous of her 'sacrifices' was perhaps William Rufus - William II, son of William the Conqueror - second Norman king of England.

This year is the 900th anniversary of William's accession, and it seems an opportune moment to re-examine the king's death in an attempt to decide whether Dr Murray is right or whether - as more conventional historians maintain - this determinedly anti-clerical monarch died in a simple hunting accident in the New Forest, on 2 August 1100.

"THE MORROW OF LAMMAS"

Rufus's reign, and Dr Murray's claims, may be summarised fairly briefly. The second, but favourite, surviving son of the Conqueror, William came to the throne on the latter's death in 1087. This was before the concept of primogeniture - the succession of the eldest son - was generally accepted in England; nor was the preservation of the patrimony intact then considered neccessary. William's elder brother Robert, called Curthose or 'short breeches', inherited the duchy of Normandy, while the ambitious third son - who was to become Henry I (reigned 1100-1135) - received only a gift of money. William Rufus's reign was on the whole a successful one, the major bone of political contention being his treatment of the English church, a body then almost as powerful in the temporal sphere as the monarchy. Rufus used the king's power to appoint successors to vacant sees and abbacies to keep many positions empty, appropriating the extensive revenues to himself, and twice forcing the saintly but ineffectual Archbishop of Canterbury, Anselm, to flee to France. In foreign affairs he peacefully if temporarily acquired control of Normandy from Curthose with a loan which enabled his brother to depart on crusade. In 1100 the king was a strong man in his forties, still a bachelor and without children, in full control of both his faculties and his country. Then, with Robert on his way home to reclaim the Duchy, Henry anxious to claim some slice of political power, and the king at the height of his powers, he was killed. It may have been accident, murder - or sacrifice.

The six-week stag-hunting season opened on August 1. Practically all the Norman nobility were dedicated huntsmen, and the king's decision to spend the 2nd in the chase need not be regarded as suspicious. Stripped of its portents, which will be discussed later, the events of the day are fairly well-attested. The earliest record is to be found in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle,* which continued to be compiled after the conquest until 1154. It observes only that "in the morning after Lammas King William when hunting was shot by one of his own men" **[4]**, and this entry would probably have been written at the end of the year, about five months after the events it described. No other account was forthcoming until those of the monks Eadmer (writing c.1115), William of Malmesbury (writing 1118-25), Florence of Worcester (about 1130) and Orderic Vitalis (c.1135), whose works between them make up virtually the whole of our reliable knowledge of the events of 2nd August **[5-8]**. They added the details generally accepted by modern historians: that the king was hit by an arrow fired by a friend, a knight called Walter Tirel **[9]**, and that he died almost immediately. Beyond that all is controversy or speculation.

THE PAGAN THEORY

Dr Murray's theory may be broken down as follows:

■ Rufus's death took place at a highly significant time - on the morning after the pagan festival later Christianised as Lammas (1 August), at the turn of the century, and when the king was 42 years old - a multiple of the mystical number of seven.

■ Similarly significant events took place seven years into Rufus's reign. The Archbishop of Canterbury,

representing the pagan arch-flaman, or high-priest, was to be sacrificed as a substitute, but fled to France. In 1100 the king's bastard nephew was killed on the pagan festival of 1 May, but this was not enough and the monarch himself had to die at the next opportunity - the festival of Lammas.

■ Rufus accepted the situation and made preparations for the succession on the morning of his death - as is shown by the smooth transfer of power to Henry I.

■ The death was planned and therefore expected. It was known throughout England and on the continent on the day it occurred. Numerous portents and omens presaged the death and indicate that it was widely anticipated.

■ Rufus was a declared pagan, swore by pagan gods and regarded himself as the head of the (pagan) English people. His death took place on the site of a ruined church which probably covered an old pagan monument.

■ The king's honourable behaviour, loyalty, and refusal to break a solemn oath are indicative of the traditional virtues of the Old Religion.

■ Rufus's paganism was evident in his treatment of the Christian church throughout his reign, but was suppressed by monkish chroniclers who also took care to blacken his historical reputation.

Historians of the Norman period, while noting Murray's theory, have been generally dismissive of it. In perhaps the most thoughtful modern discussion of the problem, Warren Hollister considers it "wildly unlikely" that Rufus was a pagan **[9]**, and William's biographer neglects to mention the hypothesis at all **[10]**. To the professional historian, the evidential treatment of Murray the anthropologist leaves much to desire, and her uncritical quotation of chroniclers writing as late as the fifteenth century has been questioned **[11]**. The doctor's apologists consider that the academics have closed their minds to any hint of the supernatural. There is ample evidence, they say, of the continued existence of the Old Religion if one is prepared to read between the lines of Christian chronicles.

It seems to me that both murder and accident are more probable causes of death than the more exotic sacrifice. Perhaps the strongest points in Murray's argument are the dates and ages she quotes to establish the significance of William's death. His age, she says, was 42 - which we recall is a multiple of the mystic seven. Rufus's exact birthdate is not in fact known, but the best estimate is that he was only 40 in 1100 **[10 pp.3, 441-5]**, and to make him 42 would seriously interfere with the otherwise workable dating of the Conqueror's many children. Nor does the king's reign fit the seven-year cycle; he ruled only "twelve years and almost ten months" **[7 Vol.5 p.295]**. Janet and Colin Bord remark on this, but consider that if William was 42, "this, falling on the turn of the century, would be a concurrence of overwhelming significance" **[12 p.161]**. It is an odd idea; the date 1100 is of course 'anno domini' and, I imagine, of little import to a pagan. Even the precise timing of the king's death is awkward; it occurred not on the festival of 1 August but on "the morrow of Lammas."

The year 1094 should also be of significance; falling seven years after the king's accession it required a sacrifice. Murray notes that archbishop Anselm fled to France at this time and suggests that this was the escape of an unwilling substitute **[2 p.57]**. There is, however, no record of any other man of similar stature being sacrificed in the place of both king and archbishop. Anselm's actions are explicable in purely political terms; his persecution was part of Rufus's conflict with the church, and it continued well past the significant year 1094. Having returned to England, the archbishop left the country again in 1097, remaining in France until after William's death - a flight which cannot be explained in terms of sacrifice.

The death of Richard, the king's bastard nephew, in May 1100 is also held significant by proponents of the Old Religion, and the fact that the young man died in a 'hunting accident' in the New Forest is at the very least an astonishing coincidence. He was not, however, the only noble to be killed while hunting; the king's eldest brother, also called Richard, had died thus thirty years

"Prostrated and killed by the just judgement of God," says an early 14th century MS of Peter of Langtoft's *Chronicle of England*, containing this depiction of Rufus. [© Trustees of the British Museum.]

before - also in the New Forest. According to Orderic, William's nephew was struck accidentally by an arrow aimed by a companion at an animal, which parallels exactly the manner in which Rufus's death is usually described. Such a description favours the pagan hypothesis - unless the monk, writing many years later, wished to make an ironic comparison between the two 'accidents'. This is not improbable; on Christmas Eve 1143 the Earl of Hereford was accidentally shot by a hunting companion, and his death is described in words which are intended to echo the death of Rufus **[13 pp.24,148,160]**. The precise date of Richard's death is impossible to establish; we know only that it took place "towards Rogation time" **[7, Vol.5 p.283]**. In 1100 this festival fell on 7-9 May, and Richard need not have been killed on the significant date of 1 May.

If one concedes that there was no good reason for Rufus to die on 2 August 1100, other academic arguments become still more plausible. Far from accepting and preparing for his death, Rufus was full of plans for the future, including a scheme to assume the government of Aquitaine while its troubadour-duke was crusading. Henry's seizure of power was the act of a political adept. He was in the New Forest with William and, hearing of his brother's death, rode immediately for Winchester. There he appropriated the Royal treasury and had himself declared king. With Robert Curthose about to arrive on the scene this was mere common sense (the two subsequently fought for the throne) and if anything Henry's speed and sure political footing indicates that he may have had William murdered. But speed of action was vital to any royal aspirant, and when Henry I died in Normandy his own successor, Stephen, owed his throne to the fact that he was the first claimant to rush across the channel to England and have himself proclaimed king.

Numerous portents are reported by the chroniclers who describe William's death. Among the more interesting were the Earl of Cornwall's meeting with a large black hairy goat carrying the dead body of the king **[1 p.170]** and a spring at Hampstead, mentioned by several chroniclers, which ran with blood for 15 days; the same phenomenon was also reported in 1098 and 1101 **[eg 5 ii, 376 and 10 pp.426-7]**. Hugh, abbot of Cluny, apparently reported on 30 July that the king had been arraigned before the throne of God and condemned to everlasting torment **[9 pp.122-4]**. Many monks had dreams, and Murray, describing an appearance of the devil in the south-west, remarks that "it seems certain that the death was expected, for the news was known not only in Devonshire but in Normandy within 24 hours...it must have been some system of preconcerted signals, such as is common among primitive peoples." **[2 p.59]** All such portents were, however, reported retrospectively and are not good evidence. We should remember, too, that contemporary chroniclers were not historians in the modern sense and thought nothing of embroidering events for dramatic effect. According to Professor Hollister, "the sudden demise of a powerful and exuberantly anti-clerical king in his prime made a deep impact on the age. Here was a spectacular illustration of that favourite medieval theme, 'pride falleth', and the point was made by nearly every chronicler. Out of the deep conviction that God does not change the course of history without warning or reason, contemporaries sought out portents - dreams, visions, a spring bubbling with blood - and took comfort in the belief that divine judgement had struck down a wicked sovereign." **[9 p.637]** Only one chronicler reliably records the speed at which news of the king's death travelled: Eadmer, Anselm's secretary, was with him in the Auvergne when the glad tidings were brought by two monks arriving some time after 5 August - well within human capabilities **[10 pp.27-8]**. Neither side seems to have considered a third explanation for the portents, the parapsychological.

Margaret Murray attaches much importance to the conversation which Rufus is alleged to have had with his killer, Walter Tirel, before the day's hunt. Her account is chiefly drawn from Orderic, who records that as the king was "laughing and joking with his attendents and pulling on his boots, a smith arrived and offered him six arrows. He took them eagerly, praising the maker for his work and, ignorant of what was in store, kept four for himself and handed two to Walter Tirel. 'It is only right,' said the king, 'that the sharpest arrows should go to the man who knows how to shoot the deadliest shots.'" A warning of danger was then received from the abbot of Gloucester (one of whose monks had seen a portent in a dream). The abbot's letters were read to William, who "exploded with mirth and said, laughing, to the knight, 'Walter, do what is right in the business you have heard'; and he replied, 'So I will my lord.'" **[7 Vol.5 p.289]**

This is certainly a peculiar conversation, and the monk's modern editor, Dr Chibnall, remarks that "these words are cryptic, and it is not clear what Orderic believed their significance to be." The evidence here is finely balanced, for while such a passage is clearly susceptible to a 'pagan' explanation, it must also be remembered that Orderic could not have been reporting verbatim, and may have intended another irony. Murray goes on to quote another chronicler, Henry Knighton, whom she paraphrases thus: "He [Rufus] was shooting at a stag and his bowstring broke; he called to Tyrrel to shoot, but Tyrrel hesitated. Then Rufus burst out, 'Draw, draw your bow for the devil's sake, and let fly your arrow, or it will be the worse for you.'". This, she comments, "conveys the idea that the killing was premeditated and that Rufus was aware that his end was at hand" **[1 p.169]**, but Knighton (who was writing in the fifteenth century, or more than 300 years later) is a notoriously unreliable source even for the history of his own time, and could hardly be quoting a source unknown to William's contemporaries **[14 i, 111]**.

THE 'PAGANISM' OF WILLIAM RUFUS

According to Margaret Murray, "in the case of William Rufus it is only by realizing that all the factors were not recorded by the Christian chroniclers that any explanation of his character or the events of his life and death can be obtained...if it is granted that Rufus was

not a Christian but a professed Pagan, his character becomes quite consistent, and his life and death are in keeping with his religion." **[1 p.162]** The evidence for the king's paganism is, however, flimsy to say the least. The dukes of Normandy were directly descended from the heathen Vikings, it is true, but both the Conqueror and Rufus's mother, Mathilda, were more than nominally Christian, as were William's brothers Robert (the crusader) and Henry. Two sisters became nuns. The precise inspiration of the king's alleged paganism is, therefore, unclear. Although he was no respecter of the church, there is no evidence that Rufus declared himself for another faith, and much that he was in many respects at least conventionally religious. Believing himself to be on his deathbed in 1093, William made a widely-reported Christian confession; he was a great patron of Battle Abbey and the church at Rochester. He gave generously to St Peter's, Gloucester, whose monks remembered him with gratitude and said masses for his soul; not every monk and churchman hated the king. "His pose," writes Prof. Barlow, "was more bravado than cultured hedonism and disbelief... [and his religious donations] seem a very respectable tally for 13 years as king. Even a prudent man would not have considered it necessary, or even advisable, to make before the age of 50 special religious preparations for his own death." **[10 pp.113-15]**

This is not to deny that William Rufus was a hard-living, hard-swearing monarch, and the chroniclers report that he swore "by the holy face of Lucca". William's oath seems to refer to a famous wooden image of Christ in the cathedral church of Lucca, in Italy, but Dr Murray twists it into a reference to the Norse god Loki by what can only be described as a piece of seat-of-the-pants philology **[1 pp.163-4]**. Her follower Hugh Ross Williamson prefers to equate Lucca with St Luke, whose emblem was the bull. Rufus, then, "was swearing on the Great Bull, which can be interpreted simply as the Mithraic oath, or as the more homely cult-oath on the horned animal." **[15 p.39]** Perhaps too much is being read into a few words; the monkish chroniclers liked to use peculiarities of speech to lend individual character to those of whom they wrote, and used oath-swearing as a literary device. Brother Henry's favoured phrase was "by the death of our lord", while the Conqueror swore by "God's splendour" and Curthose by "the marvels of God" **[see source citations in 10 p.116]**.

The significance of Florence's remark that the king was shot down on the site of an abandoned church **[6 ii, 45]** is equally contentious. Christian sites, as FT readers will know, often mask older pagan places, but in this case the point of the story is to illustrate the destruction caused by the creation of the New Forest. The Conqueror had laid waste up to thirty *vils* and depopulated a large part of Hampshire to create the forest, where only the Royal hunt might kill; the local peasants were displaced, to the outrage of English chroniclers. The death of Rufus in the forest was God's verdict on this despoilation. And although the site of the red king's death is approximately known there is, to the best of my knowledge, no archaeological evidence that it conceals any Christian - let alone pagan - holy place.

Dr Murray's remaining arguments are equally open to serious question. The devotion of the English to William Rufus is one of the most striking features of the reign, for their support more than once saved him from the consequences of a baronial revolt. The king, however, seems to have had the traditional Norman contempt for the Anglo-Saxon. Orderic, an Anglo-Norman who tended to sympathise with the English, makes the king reject the warnings of Gloucester abbey with the scornful words, "does he think I act after the fashion of the English, who put off their journeys and business on account of the snores and dreams of little old women?" **[7 Vol.5 p.289]** As usual, the monk cannot be reporting the king's exact words, but he conveys the prevailing Norman racial attitude well enough. The conquerors' society was more highly developed than the Anglo-Saxon; it was more rigidly feudal, and its lords were beginning to practice a code of knightly or chivalric conduct. This last, of course, explains William's popularly-attested fidelity and generosity as well as Murray's reference to the 'Pagan virtues' **[1 p.165]**.

William Rufus was not, in all likelihood, sacrificed to a pagan god. Nor is it probable that he was murdered; there had been better opportunities for the prime beneficiary, Henry, and no real link can be established between him and Tirel, the supposed assassin - who lived on in his French lands without benefitting materially from the red king's death. There is no certainty to it, but it must be likely that Rufus died - as his contemporaries believed - a stupid and an accidental death, on the morrow of Lammas in the year 1100.

NOTES

■ 1 - Margaret Murray, *The God of the Witches* (London 1952). ■ **2** Margaret Murray, *The Divine King in England* (London 1954). ■ **3** J. Earle & C. Plummer, *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel* (Oxford 1892). ■ **4** Eadmer, *Historia Novorum in Anglia (ed.* Martin Rule, Rolls series, London 1884) . Readers may find it more convenient to refer to G. Bosanquet's 1964 edition. ■ **5** William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regnum* (ed. William Stubbs, Rolls series, London 1887-9). ■ **6** Florence of Worcester, *Chronicon ex Chronicis* (ed. Ben Thorpe, London 1848-9). ■ **7** Orderic Vitalis, *Historia Ecclesiastica* (8 volumes, ed. Marjorie Chibnall, Oxford 1965-1980). ■ **8** Eadmer, *Vita Sancti Anselmi* (ed. RW Southern, London 1962) says that Tirel denied to his death-bed that he fired the fatal shot, or was even in the part of the forest where the killing occurred. His denial, if accepted, can only strengthen the theory that William was murdered; Murray makes much of Tirel's supposed converations with the king earlier in the day, as we will see. ■ **9** Warren Hollister, 'The strange death of William Rufus', in *Speculum - A Journal of Medieval Studies,* Vol.XLVIII No.4, 1973. ■ **10** Frank Barlow, *William Rufus* (London 1983). ■ **11** See WL Warren, 'The death of William Rufus', in *History Today* Vol.IX (January 1962), pp.27-9. ■ **12** Janet and Colin Bord, *Earth Rites* (London 1982). ■ **13** Anon, *Gesta Stephani,* ed K Potter & R Davis (London 1976). ■ **14** Henry Knighton, *Chronicon* (ed. JR Lumby, Rolls series, London 1889). ■ **15** Hugh Ross Williamson, *Historical Enigmas*. A concise up-dated version of the account given in *The Arrow and the Sword* (London 1947).

THE FEMALE ALIEN IN A HOLLOW VESSEL

by Masaru Mori.

ANCIENT JAPANESE UFO RECORDS

Those ufologists who hunt in extensive old documents generally quote the following passage of the *Nihonshoki* (the oldest authentic history of Japan compiled in 720 AD by the Imperial ordinance) as the oldest report of a UFO sighting. It is even included in the meteor section of the *Japan Astronomical Documents*, vol.7, as an event of 24 March 639.

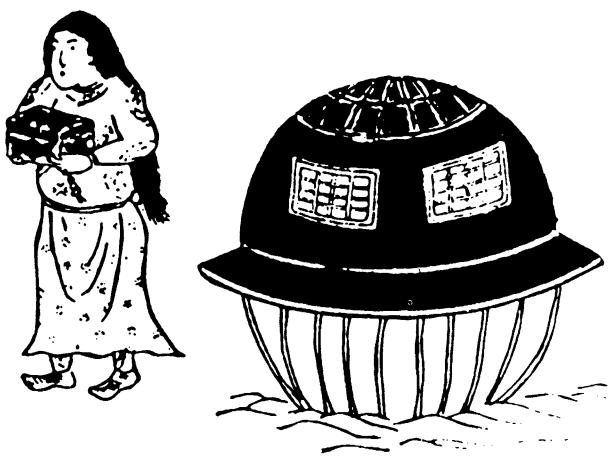
> *'A big star flew from the East to the West, accompanied by thunder-like sounds. Some said they were the sounds of the meteor. Others said they were the rumble of the earth. Then a priest named Min said, "This is not a meteor but Tengu. Since its roar resembles thunder."'*

In the quotation, *Tengu* does not mean those legendary red-faced humanoids with prominent noses which Japanese people of much later generations imagined existed in the mountains. In the astronomical terminology of Ancient China, it meant gigantic meteors in particular. I certainly have a high regard for those ufologists who found this rare document among a great mass of historical material. But it would be rash to conclude that it was a *disc* based only on the judgement that "*it was not a meteor.*" The reference to the rumble of thunder does not exactly agree with the characteristics of UFOs, which fly nearly silently. Moreover, a passage of only a few lines is much too short of details. It would be safe and probably right to assume that the priest Min meant a "gigantic meteor, called *Tengu* in Ancient China, instead of an ordinary one." But in Japan the UFO literature is not all of this category. A friend of mine - Mr. Morihito Saito, who is an avant-garde science critic and well versed in Japanese old documents - points out that the *Hoseijisesshoki* (a political diary of a certain VIP) which is included in the already cited *Japan Astronomical Documents* meteor section, tells of the following mysterious astronomical phenomenon. According to the diary it occurred on 23 August 1015:

> *"The Director General of Saemonfu* [Royal Guard] *said that he had witnessed two stars meeting at night. The circumstances were as follows: Both stars flew slowly towards each other and the moment they were ten metres or so from each other, there came little stars rashing out of each big star, coming towards the other big star, and soon returned to their respective mother star, then the two mother stars flew away swiftly. After this meeting, clouds appeared and covered the sky. I hear that people in ancient times also witnessed such a phenomenon, but recently it was so rare that I was impressed not a little."*

This report contains important details which can hardly be clarified by such simple explanations as meteors or abnormal weather. Besides, judging from the status of the witness and his accurate observation, it is highly reliable.

The behaviour of those "stars" corresponds closely with the "Nocturnal Lights" category in the Hynek classification. Even if other UFO literature of the Middle Ages could be explained away by the misinterpretation of astro-meteorological phenomena, this one document attests sufficiently the fact that in



Two depictions of the 'Female Alien' , her 'foreign' dress, her precious box and her strange vessel. **Left:** from the *Ume-no-Chiri* (1844); and **Far right:** from the *Toen-Shosetsu* (1825). This earlier illustration includes an attempt at the characters thought by the villagers to be English (in the rightmost vertical line).

Japan UFO phenomena have been in existence from the Middle Ages.

THE ALIEN AND THE VESSEL

After the Industrial Revolution which spread through Europe in the latter half of the eighteenth century and as technology made rapid progress, UFO literature (ie. UFO sighting documents) began to increase with rapidity, especially in Europe. In Japan there happened a mysterious case about this time which seems to be very singular in the world literature of UFO legends. There is mention of this case in at least two existing books of true stories written in the Edo era, both of which are illustrated. I will cite these two reports just as they are, but those who wish to read them directly in the original can consult the *Nihon-zuihitsu-taikei* [Great Collections of Japanese Essays] which are now on the market (in Japanese). The illustrations, too, are reproduced herewith from the same authentic texts.

■ *Utsurobune-no-banjo* [a female alien of the hollow vessel]:

"In the spring of the year of Kyowa [1803], on the 22nd of February, about the time of Uma [midday], a ship-like object was sighted off the shore of Harayadori in the country of Hitachi [near Tokyo], so that many local fishers rowed out towards it and finally towed it to the shore to inspect it closely. Its shape was like that of a censer, round-shaped and three *ken* [more than 5 metres] in diameter; its upper part had glass-fitted sliding doors and was coated with pitch (resin); its bottom was covered with iron plates in stripes, which were apparently a defence against sea rocks. When everybody gathered round it and peeped inside through the upper transparent part, there was a woman with a strange appearance."

"While her brow and hair were red, her face pink, she wore false hair which was white and long, and hung over her back. (Note: I [the editor Bakin Takizawa] think, according to the latter half of the section on persons in the *Rosia-kenbun-roku* (True Observations of Russia), women's clothes were tight sleeved and slenderly tailored from the waist upward, etc., and their hair was white-powdered and bundled, etc., judging from this account, the white wig of this foreign woman was also possibly white-powdered. She might be a Russian lady? The matters needs further consideration.) Was it the hair of beasts? Or twisted thread? There was no means of asking her where she came from, since they could not make themselves understood. This foreign woman had a box of two Japanese feet square. She seemed to cherish it and did not let it go even for a moment, nor did she let anyone come close to it. When they inspected minutely what was within the ship, there was a small bottle which contained two *sho* [3.6 lit.] of water. [Another version says two *to* (36 lit.) instead of two *sho*, and a small ship instead of a small bottle. Nobody knows which is true.] There were two rugs, fruit-like edibles, and some food which seemed to be made from kneaded meat."

"While she was looking calmly at the crowd of fishermen consulting with one another, she merely smiled."

"An old man told them that she must be a married daughter of a foreign king, but had a secret lover; their love affair being discovered, the lover was executed; but being unwilling to execute the daughter of a king they left her life or death to fate, setting her adrift in a hollow vessel, and so the box probably contained the head of the lover; in older times, in this vicinity a hollow vessel with such a woman aboard had drifted ashore; according to the tradition, within the vessel, there had been a cut-off head set on a board similar to a chopping block; therefore perhaps the contents of the box in question must be another such; it was then natural that the female alien should be attached to the box so that she did part with it."

"The fishermen said: if they were to report the matter to the authorities, it would cost too much money, while there was a precedent for this, in which

such a woman had been again pushed adrift. Accordingly they put her on the veseel as she originally was and set her adrift, bringing her out to sea... But it surely was the ill luck of the foreign lady. It is said that the vessel had many foreign characters inside. An English vessel, that cast anchor off Uraga Shore lately, had these foreign characters. And so the female alien must have been a daughter of a king of England, Bengal or America? No one knows about this, either. The illustration shows a sketch that was made at the time of its sighting by a dilletante. It is a pity that the sketch and the note are so brief that they do not go into details. Were there anybody conversant with this matter, I would like to make inquiries about it."

(from *Toen-shosetsu*
[the Anecdotes from the Rabbit Garden]
vol.11,by Kinrei-sha)

■ *The case of the hollow vessel*:

"On the 24th of March in the third year of Kyowa, an alien vessel came drifting ashore at Haratonohama Beach in the country of Hitachi. The vessel was hollow, rice-cooking-pot-shaped, and had a brim-like projection. From this projection upward it was black painted and had windows on all sides. Its *shoji* [sliding doors] were covered with pitch all over. To the lower part of the vessel, bands of iron were fixed, each of which was made of finest foreign iron. The vessel was twelve Japanese feet in its total height and eighteen Japanese feet in diameter. There was a woman inside. She seemed to be twenty years old, five Japanese feet tall. She had a fair complexion like snow and wore her excellent black hair dangling behind her back. Her beauty was beyond description. She had on a dress of foreign fabrics, whose name was unknown to us. She did not understand our language at all. She had a small box and let no one come near it, for reasons unknown. There were two carpet-like objects within the vessel. They were soft, but their name was not clear. As for victuals, there was some food which had every appearance of fruit, some kneaded food served in a bowl and some meat. There was a teacup of excellent design, but its make was uncertain. Haratonohama Beach is in the territory of Lord Izumi Ogasawara."

(from *Ume-no-chiri*
[the Dust of Japanese Apricots]
by Umenosha-shujin)

A DISK AND ITS OCCUPANT?

The *Toen-shosetsu* was written in the eighth year of Bunsei [1825], while the *Ume-no-chiri* was written in the fifteenth year of Tempo [1844], some twenty years later.

The *Toen-shosetsu* was edited by Bakin Takizawa, a great writer in the last days of the Tokugawa shogunate, famous for the *Satomi-hakken-den* [Legend of the Eight Dogs of Satomi Family]. After retirement, he together with his friends held a meeting every month in a cottage named *Toensha* [the Rabbit Garden] where they read curious and mysterious reports they each had brought. He afterwards compiled these reports and published them under the title of the *Toen-shosetsu*. The anecdote of the female alien in the hollow vessel was written by his son Kinrei. The *Ume-no-chiri* is another collection of anecdotes, but no details are known about its author Umenosha-shujin [Master of the Apricot House].

From the comparison of these two reports, you can deduce various interesting facts about this mysterious case. First, it is evident that neither are documents of first-hand witnesses judging from their manner of writing; and they are based on much hearsay.

In those days there were no reporting media or newspapers, and many years lapsed before these reports were made. The distortion of evidence was inevitable. These reports differ in details: the alleged date of the event is different, the colour of the female alien's hair is given an opposite description. Besides the note in the *Toen-shosetsu*, indicating that "Another version says two *to* instead of two *sho*...", suggests that different versions were already in circulation then. It is likely, however, that the *Toen-shosetsu* is much truer to the facts, in that the date of writing is earlier and its contents more detailed.

On the other hand there are some factors common to both reports: in the spring of 1803, at the shore of the country of Hitachi (the present Ibaraki Prefecture), a metal vessel with a flat spherical shape made its appearance, and out of which came a young, long haired, strangely clothed woman holding a small box, who could not understand Japanese. Accordingly, this statement at least, might be regarded as nearly true to the fact.

As for the true nature of the female alien, Bakin as well as the reporter in the *Toen-shosetsu* himself indulges in speculation. But it is obvious from their interpretation of the *alien characters* that they cannot tell whether they are English or not, and so their speculation that she was an exiled foreign princess with her lover's head, is almost groundless. From the topographical point of view, their speculation may be untenable. Since the shore in question is situated on the Pacific coast of Central Japan, it is unlikely that anything could drift ashore from Russia, America or England.

Above all, you cannot find such odd looking vessels, with "flat spherical" shapes, in the world history of shipbuilding. There are diving-bells indeed, but they are incompatible with the circumstances. Besides, it was not until a century after the event that self-sufficient submarines were invented.

It should be remembered that these reports were written within the limited contexts of the knowledge of the people of the Edo era. Therefore outer descriptions such as dates, places, actions and shapes can be dependable, but inner descriptions such as the nature of events, impressions and interpretations have to be accepted with great reservation.

It follows that these common factors already cited are the most reliable in this case, which falls exactly under the heading of 'UFO landings and encounters with Occupants' (CE3) in the Hynek classification.

PHENOMENOMIX· HUNT EMERSON= ·The THUNDERBEAN·
STONES FROM THE SKY... MYSTERIOUS OBJECTS LONG BELIEVED TO HAVE WONDERFUL POWERS.... TO BE SEEDS FROM THE STARS.. HEAVENLY EGGS....
A POOR MAN WALKS WHILE WATER WETS HIM....
SUDDENLY HIS BEAN IS CREASED BY...
...A STONE BEAN!
HE CARRIES IT HOME TO HIS HOVEL!
WHAT IN THE NAME OF GLORY ARE YE NOW BRINGING INTO OUR HOUSE?!
WIFE! WIFE! IT IS A THUNDERBEAN! THE STORM HAS GIVEN US A THUNDERBEAN!
WHAT IN THE NAME OF DELIRIUM IS A THUNDERBEAN?
IT IS THE ANSWER TO OUR PRAYERS, WIFE! THE THUNDERBEAN WILL FEED US!
QUICKLY! BOIL UP A PAN OF WATER!
HMPH! 'TIS ALL WE'VE GOT IN THE HOUSE!..
GATHER ROUND, CHILDREN! THE THUNDERBEAN WILL MAKE US A DELICIOUS SOUP EVERY NIGHT!!
COME, FAMILY! LET US DRINK A MERRY TOAST TO THE MIRACLE OF THE THUNDERBEAN!
YECH! IT TASTES LIKE BOILED METEORITE!
MEANWHILE, IN THE PAN....
HEAT...
I FEEL A HATCHING COMING ON... HERE GOES...
SURRENDER, EARTHLINGS! YOUR PLANET IS OURS!!
FOOD!!
CHEW
THIS IS MORE LIKE IT!
MUNCH! CHOMP!
SURREE! EARTH IS SAFE!
I MUST WRITE THIS INTO MY ANNALS!
aaaaah!.. WHEN'S THE NEXT STORM?
DISGUSTING AND DELICIOUS!

JOSEPH GLANVIL - PSYCHIC RESEARCH PIONEER

By a quirk of fate we found we had two articles discussing the pioneering work of Joseph Glanvil. He lived at an important time in the development of English thought, polarised by the witch-hunters on the one hand, and the new Royal Society on the other. The following six pages are an introduction to his work and his times - the issues touched upon are fundamental to the fortean approach , and we shall be returning to them again in com ing issues.

JOSEPH GLANVIL was born in Plymouth in **1636** and entered Exeter College, Oxford, in 1652, gaining his MA six years later. During the Interregnum, he was chaplain to Francis Rous. His first treatise, *The Vanity of Dogmatizing*, appeared in 1661. This work contains a prediction of the telephone, or perhaps something more marvellous: "To confer at the distance of the Indies by sympathetick contrivances may be as natural to future times as to us is a litterary correspondence." He became an admirer of the Cambridge Platonists, especially Henry More, and a friend of the founders of the Royal Society, of which he was elected a fellow on 14 December 1664. He was inducted rector of the Abbey Church at Bath on 23 June 1666, became chaplain-in-ordinary to Charles II in 1672, and received a prebend at Worcester in 1678. He was much troubled by the puritan fanatics at Bath, who seemed to have gone back in spirit to 1643. He died at Bath on 4 November **1680**.

THE POLITICS OF PRODIGIES

by John Nicholson.

INTRODUCTION

Fortean Times has given much space to the case of the Scottish nanny who was tried in Italy for witchcraft. **[FT38,p32; FT39,p28; FT42,p46]**

Apart from the sensational nature of the accusation and the chaos surrounding the events in court, there remains a core of unanswered questions. These concern not so much the inexplicable phenomena associated with this young woman as the revealing attitudes exhibited in this dispute.

I suggest this merits further examination for two reasons: it has a remarkable similarity to other cases; it offers a context for forteanism, so rescuing a traditional vocabulary.

THE EVIDENCE

In September 1661, Florence Newton, "the witch of Youghal", was accused of two counts: bewitching a young servant girl into fits, and causing a death by witchcraft. The trial of Goody Newton, which took place at the Cork Assizes, was special for a number of reasons:

- The account of the trial was based on the notes made by the presiding Judge. This is therefore a unique eye-witness account of an actual witch trial. **[1]**
- It is further unusual because witchcraft was relatively unknown in Ireland.
- It took place at a crucial moment. The monarchy and Church of England had just been restored and this led to other changes of a profound nature. The newly-formed Royal Society was about to issue Science's Laws.
- It gives us a chance to meet Joseph Glanvil, who was the chief investigator for the Royal Society and who wrote up the Judge's notes.

The chief witness was the victim, the servant girl. She claimed that Goody Newton had taken offence when denied a request. Soon afterwards the witch had knocked the girl down and violently kissed her, after which the girl began having visions, including one of a spirit who gave orders which she refused to follow. As a result of her disobedience, the girl manifested the standard symptoms of possession: abnormal strength, loss of memory, and vomiting. (**FT40,p17** offered examples of prodigious vomiting by non-possessed persons). On this occasion the ingredients were "needles, pins, horsenails, stubs, wool and straw."

The case had another feature which was not so common but which will be of great interest to forteans. The victim was subject to showers of stones "which would follow her from place to place." Some of these stones were caught, though only by the girl and her master. One of them had a hole through it so the girl immediately tied the stone with a leather thong to her purse. Despite a tight knot, the stone disappeared, leaving only the knot.

Vanishing tricks by objects which have appeared strangely is not uncommon. The Roman historian, Dio Cassius, personally took some of a fall of silver and used it to plate bronze coins. Although the miracle lasted three days, on the fourth the silver coating had vanished.

THE GREAT INVESTIGATOR

In the excitement and uncertainty of the early 1660s the attitudes displayed to such phenomena could have very powerful effects politically. The intrigues surrounding the Restoration did not end with the coronation. On the contrary, in 1661 there were many plots against the monarchy, of which two major ones became famous. Notable plots were uncovered every year up to 1666, and many afterwards. In this atmosphere there were those who saw God's or the Devil's hand in such activities.

In the first two months after the Restoration the propaganda campaign was in full swing. A book offered a list of "judgements or handiworks of God, by earthquake, lightning, whirlwind, great multitude of toads and flies, and also the striking of divers persons with sudden death." More such signs were published - all implying that God was preaching against the Restoration. The government responded by re-introducing censorship.

The counter-propaganda took a sophisticated line. Rather than collect rival signs in favour of the regime, its new agency, the Royal Society, denied the *importance* of prodigies. It would be some years before the next step could be risked: the denial of the *existence* of prodigies.

In the usual way, the authorities sent their investigator to come up with an explanation. He was Joseph Glanvil. Born in 1636, he had qualified at Oxford in 1658. For the next 22 years he tirelessly investigated every case, taking part in some personally. In 1662 for example, he was called as an Expert in the trial of the Lowestoft witches. Like the other Expert, Sir Thomas Browne, Glanvil gave a rational explanation for belief in witchcraft.

His *Some Philosophical Considerations Touching the Being of Witches and Witchcraft* was published in the same year as Florence Newton's trial, 1661.

By 1668 his ideas had not only strengthened but drawn him into the fight. *A Blow at Modern Sadducism*

gave a form to his view of the controversy. His master work developed this line further and was published in 1681, the year after his death. It was edited by his friend Henry More, the great Cambridge Platonist. The book went into a second edition by 1683, and others in 1689, 1700, 1726. It was even translated into German, in 1701. It was Glanvil's examination of 26 "of the most credible and best attested stories" which gave *Saducismus Triumphatus* its reputation as the authoritative expression of the new scientific outlook as preached by the Royal Society.

Certainly the book was the mouthpiece of the Ragley Castle circle. To this home of Lady Conway had come van Helmont, Boyle, More and Glanvil, as well as many practitioners. Here scientific investigations and laboratory-like experiments were zealously pursued by some of the most intelligent and enquiring minds of the time.

The six most famous cases discussed in the book were also illustrated in the frontispiece. [See next page (**p54**).]

THE SUPERNATURAL IN DANGER

Henry More had set the new pattern as early as 1653 with *An Antidote Against Atheism*. In the heady days of the establishment of the Republic, when the Puritans looked for a total reformation of the universities, the aim was the introduction of the New Learning. As well as recent discoveries in astronomy, this called for colleges to be devoted to the study of intensely mystical-magical subjects, as expressed in the works of Jacob Bohme. Here would have been a visible college actively engaged in collecting and manipulating phenomena.

More saw that the new Science would eventually try to abolish the supernatural. For More this meant "no spirit, no God". Such a prospect led him to defend the existence of the Devil and his works - in order to retain God. In his *Encyclopaedia of Witchcraft and Demonology* (1959) Rossell Hope Robbins is particularly angry at More, blaming him in a large part for prolonging belief in witchcraft. "No English writer accepted so completely and unreservedly the whole paraphernalia of witchcraft." He believed literally in transvection, metamorphosis, sabbats, familiars, and sexual intercourse with devils. "As one of England's most learned and most respected professors, More countenanced ignorance and superstition, instead of using his intellectual leadership to turn the less gifted and fortunate away from witchcraft... Instead of applying scientific methods to break down superstition, More used these methods to reinforce witch beliefs."

Robbins' scorn is total. "More's advocacy of witchcraft in the seventeenth century was as fantastic as belief in 'bug-eyed monsters' by any twentieth century atomic scientist."

Unfortunately for Robbins' faction, as the atomic scientists are drawing towards bug-eyed monsters, so they are, inevitably, having to deal with the other impossibility.

BUG-EYED PHILOSOPHY

The tenth anniversary issue of *Fortean Times* (**FT41**) contained attempts to construct new theories and philosophies derived from prodigies. Without meaning to give offence, may I suggest why I feel this is unnecessary.

The phenomena described and collected by forteans are not new. On the contrary, they have been familiar in every age and every culture. Why then are they imbued with an air of outrage? Simply because Western Science has no vocabulary to contain them. What fun - the more irrefutable proofs are documented by forteans, the more Western Science refuses to acknowledge their possibility. Therefore 'fortean phenomena' becomes a stick with which to beat Western Science. Yet this is the product of Western Science's narrow viewpoint. As already observed, the phenomena are universal, so all this proves is not that the phenomena are the exception but that Western Science is the exception! Indeed, Western Science is based on this central denial.

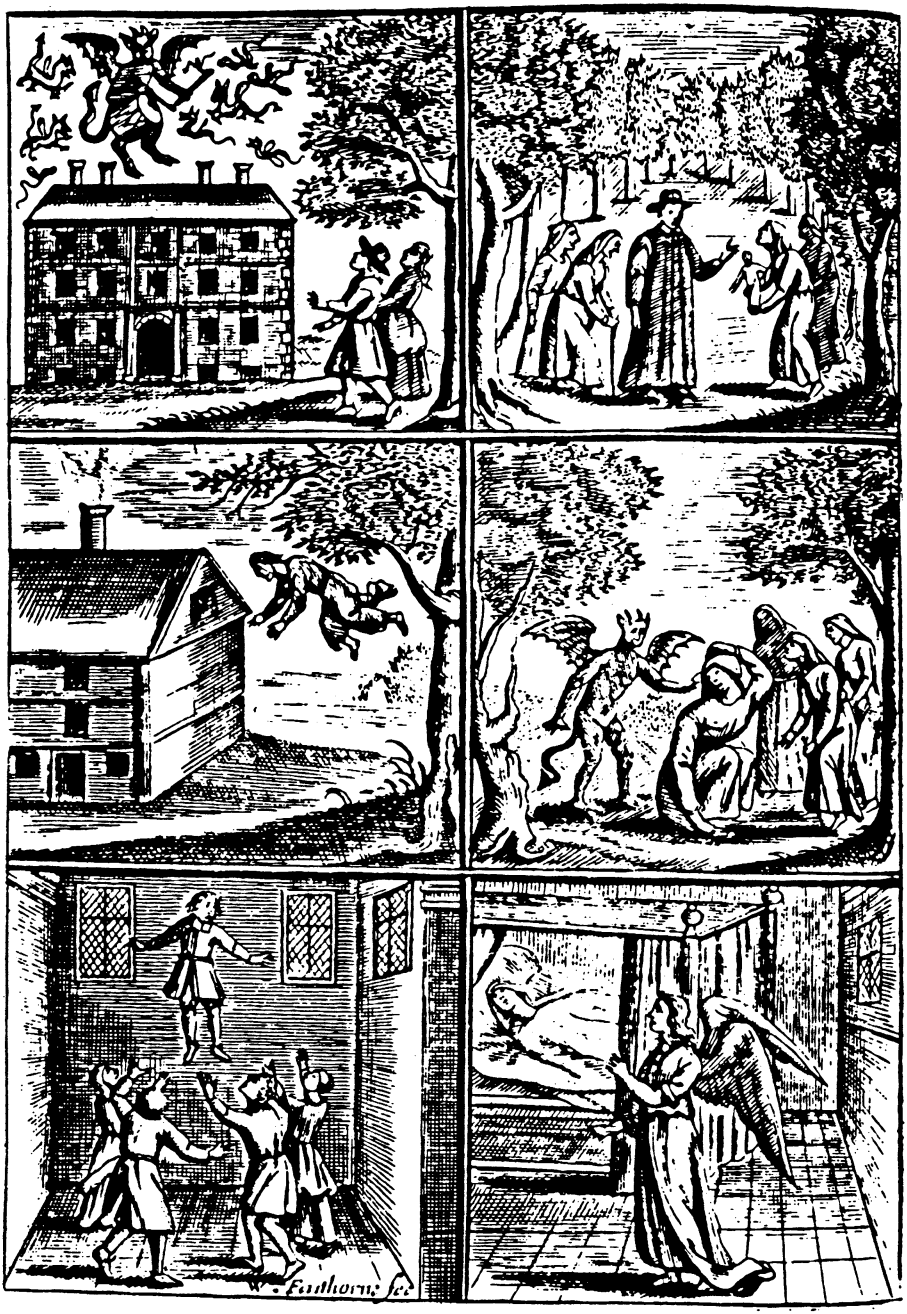
There has been no difficulty in treating fortean phenomena in non-Western Science. Indeed we find the opposite. Instead of being shunned and denied, fortean phenomena are welcomed. They are not a source of fear but of delight. They are not pushed to the fringe of experience but made the very centre of daily life. It would seem that the rest of the world is full of happy forteans.

The next realisation is that this enviable state of affairs used to prevail in Europe until comparatively recently. The abandonment of this universal attitude was a cause for self-congratulation by those who deliberately sought to overthrow and destroy the wisdom of the ages. These fanatics and bigots proclaimed themselves as the founders of a new truth, never before discovered, which made all previous truths into lies. Their revolution was secured in England through the agency of the Royal Society, which was established as the Church of the New Wisdom. Unfortunately the imposition of the creed on their own people did not satisfy these zealots. While the rest of the world continued in the traditional way, they could not relax; there was always a danger. England's history in the last three centuries has been regarded as so exceptional that many have sought explanations in the comfort of the conspiracy theory. In its way, is this not also a fortean phenomenon?

Where does this leave forteanism? Could it be an attempt to acknowledge the existence of a Supernatural while, at the same time, ignoring its religious character? Either way it seems to me that forteanism has an uneasy relationship with Science. Any attempts to systematise or discipline forteana are dangerously like the efforts made by those idealists who try to reform Communism to its original purity. Anyone for a Church of Fort?

NOTE

■ **1** - The trial was also the antithesis of most European witch trials, being held in public, with all the witnesses present and formally sworn, nor was torture used to obtain a confession, and its conduct was, by comparison, a fair approximation to standard legal procedure, despite its regrettably fatal outcome. - Ed.



The frontispiece to the second part of Joseph Glanvil's *Saducismus Triumphatus* (second edition, 1683), illustrating six cases from his collection which were thought to have supernatural involvement. **Clockwise from top left:** The 'Drummer of Tedworth' (no such apparitions were reported); An imagined rendezvous of witches at Trister Gate, Wincanton (featuring a Man in Black!); Margaret Jackson, a Scottish witch, devoting herself to the Devil; an early 'bedroom invader' report, an apparition of an Angel from Amsterdam; the levitation of Richard Jones at Shepton Mallet; and the flight of Julian Cox, an accused witch of Somerset.

JOSEPH GLANVIL AND THE GHOSTS OF WESSEX

by C. Demont.

The latter decades of the 17th century were a golden age for para-psychology and occult studies. A newfound sense of scientific curiosity and method spurred on the scholars of the Royal Society, many of them in Wessex: John Aubrey in Wiltshire, Anthony Ettricke in Dorset, and in Somerset Andrew Paschal and Joseph Glanvil. These men were united by friendship or at least acquaintance; each also had contacts with the local gentry, from whom they could gather stories of their respective areas. This article will give an account of the thought, and of the Wessex cases studied by, one of these men: Joseph Glanvil of Frome Selwood, 1636-1680.

GLANVIL'S THEORIES

Glanvil's writing career lasted from 1661 until his death. His para-psychological interests grew out of philosophical speculations on the uncertainty of knowledge: in 1665, in his *Scepsis Scientifica*, he suggested that the supernatural required faith rather than reason. This channelling of his philosophical energy was due largely to personal investigation of the Tedworth poltergeist, a case which formed the *Sorcery*, published in 1666. From then until his death he continued to gather and authenticate stories of ghosts and spirits, and in 1681 the *Considerations* were posthumously reprinted with this unpublished material under the title *Saducismus Triumphatus*. The publisher later invited the neo-platonist philosopher Henry More to prepare a third edition. It is to this edition of 1689 that reference is here made.

Glanvil's ideas about the supernatural are set out at some length in the introductory essays under which he buried his folklore material: "I have no humour or delight in telling Stories", he said, "I record them as Arguments for the confirmation of a Truth": and readers expecting lurid tales had to wade through huge tracts of scriptural debate and verbal quibbles. Henry More, equally out of touch with a reading public, inserted utterly unreadable chapters on philosophical niceties of Platonic doctrine, but made amends by adding a few ghost stores on his own account.

Glanvil's arguments, however, are of some interest when he leaves his general ruminations on the spiritual and discusses evidence. His writing is sustained by a moral purpose, which is, simply, that for a believer to defend the existence of God, it is necessary to uphold that of ghosts: for "those that dare not bluntly say, there is No God, content themselves (for a fair step and introduction) to deny that there are Spirits or Witches." This crusading attitude was hardly conducive to scientific scepticism, and Glanvil's work is blotted for a modern by the way in which he snipes at his opponents as infidels, and more seriously by his consent to the horrors of the witch trials. The persecutions of the 16th and 17th centuries were only slightly felt in Wessex, but their effects on Somerset must be attributed, not so much to popular or economic drives, but to the actions of a group of witch-hunting gentry, notably Richard Barnard, Glanvil, and Robert Hunt. Glanvil could not bear the idea that the persecution was all a delusion - "that the gravest and wisest Judges have been Murderers, and the sagest persons Fools, or designing imposters" - and so consented to many innocent deaths. There are several accounts of Somerset witch trials in the book, but our scrutiny is better directed to the genuine hauntings.

In his refutations of the Saducists (a word for obstinate and prejudiced opponents of belief in the paranormal, which could well be revived) Glanvil puts forward some familiar arguments. He calls for liberty of inquiry: "Matters of fact well proved ought not to be denied, because we cannot conceive how they can be performed. We should judge of the action by the evidence, and not the evidence by the measures of our fancies about the action." Of miracles, he says, "we are ignorant of the extent and bounds of Nature's sphere, and possibilities", and he calls for a leap of the imagination in dealing with the unknown; "there may be as great a variety of Intellectual Creatures in the invisible world, as there is of animals in the visible". Sometimes he anticipates the idea of forteana: "those warnings that the world sometimes hath of approaching Judgements and Calamities by Prodigies and sundry odd Phaenomena, are of the upper world"; sometimes that of synchronicity: "we refer many of the strange thwarts, and unexpected events, the disappointments and lucky co-incidences that befall us, into the Conduct and Menages of those invisible Superiors."

But he remains a product of his time. When it comes to seeking causes, Glanvil argues lamely for a conventional demonology, tricked out with some neo-platonic theory on aerial spirits. Most of the arguments about the pointlessness of the behaviour of spirits are met with the graphic but unsound answer that, since their nature is unknown to us, nothing about them can be improbable. "Possibly we can take no more aim, or guess at their projects and designments, than the gazing Beasts can do at ours". With this in mind, he defends the existence of lycanthropy, transferred wounds, suckled familiars, and the diabolical pact.

GLANVIL'S EVIDENCE

Five accounts of the paranormal in Wessex are given at length in *Saducismus Triumphatus*. Other brief references mention a spectre at Exeter (p16); an extract from Dr. Robert Plot's *The Natural History of Oxfordshire* on a death warning of knockings, peculiar to the Bamptons of that county, which occurred in Exeter (p487); and an addition by Henry More (p498) - "A Reverend and Learned Friend of mine told me in a Man's Daughter of North Cadbury in Somersetshire, that for some Months together, she could put on no clean Linnens nor Holiday Cloths, but they would be snipt and slasht full of holes, as her Father for certain related of her to him."

One account is bound up in a witch trial from Shepton Mallet, instigated by Robert Hunt (p339 ff). On 15 November 1657, Richard Jones saw one Jane Brooks come to the door, give him an apple, and stroke his side: he fell ill. Later in a fit he had a vision of Brooks, and got a relative to strike the phantasm with a knife on its hand, a corresponding wound being found on the woman. 8 December: the boy was legally examined, most of his evidence consisting of fits. The Justices, by blindfolding the child and testing him, found that he started at the touch of Brooks, but not of others. She appeared in a vision and gave him two pence: tests showed that, the money being put in a fire in an adjoining room, the boy would fall ill; when took out, he recovered. "On the 25 of Feb. between two and three in the Afternoon, the Boy being at the House of Richard Isles in Shepton Mallet, went out of the Room into the Garden, Isles his wife followed him, and was within two Yards when she saw him rise up from the ground before her, and so mounted higher and higher, till he passed in the Air over the Garden-Wall, and was carried so above ground more than 30 yards, falling at last at one Jordan's Door at Shepton, where he was found as dead for a time." Other levitations followed... Brooks was imprisoned in March.

Three cases are of poltergeists, then as now scientifically acceptable. The case of the drumming which afflicted the house of Mr. Mompesson in South Tedworth, from 1661 on, became nationally famous, being taken up by the Court: Charles II sent an (inconclusive) commission to investigate. Glanvil soon found himself an authority: "I have received letters about it out of many parts... I have been haunted almost as bad as Mr. Mompesson's House."

All poltergeists are much alike, and the Tedworth case is described in most literature on the subject. Thumping and kicking began in April 1661, around the boarded outside of the house, and over the next few months diversified into rapping in the rooms and the beating and scratching of beds. In November a servant, who saw two boards levitating, asked that one be placed in his hand, and continued playing catch with it before a roomful of witnesses. After quiet during a prayer service, chairs and shoes began walking. In December events became quieter: objects were hidden in ashes, bedclothes pulled off, and questions answered by knocking. In January 1662, singing was heard in the chimney, and one night "lights were seen in the House. One of them came into Mr. Mompesson's Chamber which seemed blue and glimmering, and caused great stiffness in the Eyes of those who saw it" - a problem common in ufo contact. A horse whose hind legs had been twisted into its mouth was rescued with a crowbar. Despite the imaginative woodcut, nothing was ever seen: the drumming was attributed to a drummer who had a grudge against Mompesson, but on slight evidence. Phenomena focused on the two daughters of the house, following them when they changed bedrooms.

Less famous was the poltergeist at Old Gast's House in Little Burton (a hamlet of Long Burton in north Dorset). The events of June 1677 are recorded by James Sherring, a witness. Noises were of thunder, scratching, and hammering at the beds; objects moved included wet towels, fire-tongs, shoes and a knife. Bedclothes were tugged off in all the rooms, and the phenomena focused on Gast's grand-daughters (12 and 16 years old): they were continually pinched, and had stones thrown at them at a distance from the house. Some incidents show a complete reversal of reality. A saddle taken some miles away to Leigh reappeared overnight at the house: later, it threw itself on the fire, and, becoming unnaturally heavy, could not be removed for some time - but was not at all burnt. A 14-foot pole from the yard appeared in a bedroom: it could not be removed without breaking a window. Twice a hand appeared - firstly during a fit of knocking, when a hand and wrist were seen holding a hammer, but slipped behind the bolster; secondly when the girls felt a hand in bed with them; they caught it in the sheets, beat it to a pulp, and left it till morning under a stone, which was thrown off.

The third poltergeist case was witnessed by Andrew Paschal of the Royal Society. It lasted three nights at his family's house in Maidenhead. Noises included rustling silk, clattering, scratching, and the flinging around of furniture. Bedclothes were tugged off from most members of the family, and shoes thrown around. On the third day there was a sound of inarticulate whispering: when Paschal asked it to speak up, it became louder, but equally indistinct. The phenomena do not seem to have focused.

The encounter of Thomas Goddard of Marlborough with his dead father-in-law in 1674 was almost certainly a fraud. Goddard said that the ghost had instructed him to pay an old debt and reveal a murdered body, but a relative who accompanied him to meet the phantom saw nothing but Goddard talking to himself, and when the magistrates dug up the supposed grave of the victim, they found nothing. It seems that he was using the conventional ghost image to stir up family issues.

JERUSALEM'S FIREBALLS

by Steve Moore.

In 363 AD an attempt was made to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem, at the direction of the Roman emperor Julian. The project came to naught, abandoned soon after its inception, allegedly because of strange phenomena at the work-site, which apparently resulted in several workmen being burned to death. There are two main versions of the events, differing widely in detail; and the case is particularly interesting in that one version is Christian, the other pagan. The differing accounts will be examined below; first, some background information...

JULIAN THE APOSTATE

Flavius Claudius Julianus (332-363), a relation of the reigning emperor Constantius II, was raised in an empire only recently Christianised by Constantine the Great, who had died in 337 **[1]**. Raised in the Christian faith, he spent most of his youth imprisoned by Constantius, before being released and allowed to study in Athens and Asia Minor. A follower of the later Neo-Platonist philosophy and student of Maximus of Ephesus, who was probably responsible for the (secret) conversion to paganism, Julian was eventually called to court and given a military post to which he was thought to be quite unsuited. Proclaimed Caesar in 355, he was sent into Gaul where, despite the malignance of his subordinates, he not only cleared the province of German invaders, but also administered it with extraordinary success for five years.

Proclaimed emperor by the troops in Gaul in 360, Julian started marching east the following year, and civil war with Constantius seemed inevitable; but the latter obligingly died on the way to Constantinople to suppress Julian, leaving his rival in sole command of the empire. At about the same time, Julian openly professed his paganism, declared universal religious toleration, and allowed religious exiles (both pagan and Christian) to return to their homelands; acts for which he has been condemned by Christian critics ever since, of course. It was the Christians who also gave him the title of 'the apostate' for giving up his faith; Julian would doubtless have seen things the other way round.

In autumn 362 Julian moved to Antioch, preparing for a campaign against the Persians, which he began in March 363. After meeting with mixed success, Julian was killed in a skirmish with the Persians while withdrawing his army, on the 26th June 363.

A writer of some talent, Julian composed letters, satires, philosophical treatises, and a long and closely-argued piece *Against the Galilaeans* which, unsurprisingly, survives only in fragments **[2]**. He never indulged in open persecution of the Christians, although any of that faith attacking the persons or property of the pagan priesthood were punished as the criminals they undoubtedly were. Instead he promoted anti-Christian propaganda, forbade Christians to teach the pagan classics (such as Homer and Hesiod), gave privileges to pagans and restored their temples; actions for which he has been reviled with greater venom than other emperors received who threw people to the lions.

It is in this context that his decision to rebuild the Jerusalem Temple has to be seen. A great proponent of animal sacrifice, especially as the Christians did not practise it, Julian took to the Jews because their religion allowed sacrificial worship; only to run up against the problem that Jews were allowed to sacrifice only at the Temple in Jerusalem, which had been destroyed by Vespasian and Titus in 70 AD. Another possible reason for undertaking the project was to prove false the prophecy made by Jesus that not one stone of the Temple would be left upon another. Or again, he might have wished to exploit the Jewish prophecy that the Temple would only be rebuilt when the Messiah appeared **[3]**.

Whatever the reason, it was good propaganda, and Julian decided to restore the Temple at his own expense, although apparently there were also contributions from the Jewish population in Jerusalem. The decision to undertake the rebuilding seems to have been taken during Julian's stay in Antioch. There are no precise dates for the commencement of the project, and the date of its abandonment is disputed. The general consensus seems to be that it was terminated before Julian marched east from Antioch in March 363; but dates as late as 27th May have been proposed **[3]**.

The project was put in the hands of Alypius, a native of Antioch and a former governor of Britain, who apparently proceeded with it vigorously, until it ran into trouble...

AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS

Also born in Antioch, Ammianus (c.330-395) was a Greek who served in the Roman army under Julian, both in Gaul and during his Persian campaign. Retiring to Rome in 378, he there composed his *History*, intended as a continuation of the historical works of Tacitus, and covering the years 96-378.

Writing in Latin, Ammianus seems to have used the Greek history of his contemporary, Eunapius (c.345-420) as a source, supplementing it with material from his personal experience. Eunapius's history is also lost to us, as are Ammianus' first 13 books.

A pagan and an admirer of Julian, Ammianus nevertheless speaks unbiasedly of the Christians, and his general reliability has never been called into question. Although he frequently mentions how Julian interpreted everyday occurrences as omens (stumbling horses, flights of birds, and so on), Ammianus is not much given to recording tales of miracles as such, and his coverage of events at Jerusalem, in only two brief paragraphs, comes as something of a surprise.

The tale is told impersonally. Ammianus may well

have been retained in the emperor's service during Julian's period in Antioch, in which case he would not have witnessed the events he recorded; and writing some twenty years after those events, his most likely source for this story would seem to be Eunapius. As can be gathered from his extant *Lives of the Philosophers and Sophists*, Eunapius is rather more credulous than Ammianus.

His first paragraph on the subject **[5]** simply records the decision to rebuild the Temple, and the assignment of the project to Alypius. The second paragraph runs as follows:

"But though Alypius applied himself vigorously to the work, and though the governor of the province co-operated with him, fearful balls of fire burst forth with continual eruptions close to the foundations, burning several of the workmen and making the spot altogether inaccessible. And thus the very elements, as if by some fate, repelling the attempt, it was laid aside."

It is implied that the phenomena occurred over a prolonged period. And as the fireballs were said to burn, we have something more than a 'fireball as light-phenomenon' to deal with.

A rather different view of events is given by our second, Christian source...

GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS

Sometime Bishop of Constantinople, Gregory (329-389) was born at Nazianzus in Cappadocia, and was a class-mate of Julian's at Athens. He wrote a number of orations, poems, an autobiography, and two *Invectives against the Emperor Julian* **[6]**, apparently written shortly after Julian's death, which consist mainly of a gloating exultation over the emperor's death, attacks on his character, and a large amount of *post-facto* scandal-mongering.

Gregory's *Invectives* are sensationalist, credulous and full of miraculous tales, all of which were undoubtedly good for business but not overly helpful to anyone trying to disentangle the truth. Some of his tales about Julian are so full of internal contradictions as to be patently made up. On other occasions he tends to hedge his bets, giving a fairly straightforward account of events and then adding 'but some people also say...' before giving a totally miraculous account as well. His report of the events at Jerusalem follows this pattern, and occurs near the beginning of the second *Invective*.

Gregory makes no mention of Alypius, and by his account the project seems to have been carried out almost entirely by the Jews, whose women sold their jewellery to finance it, and who also helped with the clearing of the site. Then, the workers found themselves "being driven against one another, as though by a furious blast of wind, and sudden heaving of the earth." Panic seems to have resulted, with everyone running for shelter wherever they could find it. Gregory continues: "There are some who say that neither did the sacred place admit them, but that when they approached the folding doors that stood wide open, on coming up to them they found them closed in their faces by an unseen and invisible power which works wonders of this sort for the confusion of the impious and the saving of the godly. But what all people nowadays report and believe is that when they were forcing their way and struggling about the entrance, a flame issued forth from the sacred place and stopped them, and some it burnt up and consumed... whilst others it maimed in the principal parts of the body..." After some sanguinary remarks about God's justice in punishing the disbelievers, Gregory goes adds "there stood in the heavens a light circumscribing a cross."

There is nothing to suggest that Gregory was any closer to Jerusalem than Ammianus at the time of the occurrences, and he is not particularly prone to naming his sources. There is no mention of Ammianus's continually erupting balls of fire, and Gregory represents the event as a once-only happening, which was not repeated. But there is enough common ground between them to suggest that they deal with the same event (whatever it was) .

EXPLANATIONS

Gregory's translator, CW King, provides a lengthy foot-note to this passage **[6]**. He, happy man that he is, has a rational explanation: it was only a sudden storm of wind that frightened the 'superstitious Jews', who panicked and ran for shelter. His solution next depends on the interpretation of the term, the 'sacred place'. The Greek text uses a different term here for 'sacred place' to that which it usually uses for the Temple, so he declares the 'sacred place' to refer to a church instead, which he surmises must be the nearby Helena's Church. The 'unseen and invisible powers' which closed the folding doors are explained as the keepers of the church, unseen within, who "naturally shut the doors in the face of a mad crowd of Jews" running toward them. They then "proceeded to disperse those attempting to force an entrance by the usual expedient of throwing fire upon them through the windows." Are we to assume from this that it was considered the 'usual expedient' to keep large amounts of inflammable material inside a Christian church.

King knows of Ammianus's contention that the globes of fire issued from the site of the Temple, and admits that this would completely alter the case, but he manages to brush Ammianus aside as confounding the fireballs with the fire lobbed by Christians. He finally squashes Ammianus's much simpler record of events as being merely a later embellishment on Gregory's narrative. King is of the opinion that Gregory wrote within a few months of Julian's death, and Ammianus is known to have been writing at least fifteen or more years later, but I find it hard to reconcile Ammianus's obvious simplication with the concept of a 'later embellishment'.

GW Bowersock **[3]** takes a different view of things. He makes no mention of the difficulty in the Greek terminology, declares for the 'sacred place' being the Temple itself, and states that Gregory explicitly connects the fire with the Temple doors. He supports this with material from another contemporary Christian writer, Ephraem of Nisibis (c.306-373) who, improving on Gregory, wrote four *Invectives* against Julian in Syriac, for which there is no English trans-

lation. Ephraem implies that the doors were of the new Temple, actually under construction, which would suggest that the project was fairly advanced.

This brings the story more into line with Ammianus, even if we have to bid a sad farewell to the hurtling Christian fire-bombs being tossed out of Helena's church. Bowersock also records further events alleged to have taken place by later ecclesiastical historians. They mention fire from heaven, a mysterious cave, and frequent appearances of the Cross: in the sky, on clothing, on books, and on houses... a progression of embellishment which makes even stranger King's contention that Ammianus is the embellisher. Even Gregory himself implies that his final version of events only came about much later.

As to what the fire was (whatever its form or place of origin), Bowersock has no answers. Obviously picking up on Gregory's mention of a sudden heaving of the earth, his contention is that the building work may have been stopped by an earthquake, the implication being that all else is mere tales; although he doesn't discount the possibility of the project being brought to an end by an engineered miracle, promoted by either Jewish or Christian opponents. He quotes a Syriac chronicle of 724 to show that earthquakes occurred in May 363. The chronicle gives a list of twenty-one cities affected, which apparently does not mention Jerusalem. A date of May only gives more problems, however, as Bowersock himself is a strong proponent of the theory that the project was abandoned before Julian left Antioch in March.

His last piece of evidence is a letter allegedly written by Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem (d.386). On internal evidence (some of the places mentioned as being in Jerusalem did not exist) the letter is thought to be a forgery, possibly made as early as 400. This apparently mentions the event in Jerusalem, and the "automatic opening of the doors of the Jewish synagogue and the emission of a consuming fire", as opposed to the closing of the doors mentioned by Gregory. The same letter also gives dates; the Temple rebuilding being started on the 18th May, and concluding on Monday the 19th. As it happens, the 19th May 363 was indeed a Monday, but even this circumstantial evidence doesn't help much. There are problems first with the date being so late, and second with the more protracted building time implied by Ammianus. Jewish sources are apparently remarkably silent on the whole subject.

We can only commend the accounts to students of folklore (there are obvious parallels to the common motif of the church that cannot be built due to the intervention of the devil), of religious phenomena, of earthquake phenomena, and of spontaneous fires, to do with them as they will. And, of course, to connoisseurs of explanations...

NOTES

■ **1** - Dates and background details have been drawn from *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (2nd ed.), edited by NGL Hammond and HH Scullard, Oxford, 1970. ■ **2** - Julian's extant literary output is contained in *Julian* (3 vols.), trans. by WC Wright. Loeb Classical Library, Heinemann/Harvard, 1913 & 1923. References relevant to this article are found in Vol. 3, p xvii, xxi-xxii, xxxii. ■ **3** - *Julian the Apostate* by GW Bowersock. Duckworth, London, 1978. See pages 88-90, 120-122. ■ **4** - *Philostratus and Eunapius: Lives of the Sophists*, trans. by WC Wright, Loeb Classical Library, Heinemann/Harvard, 1921. ■ **5** - *Ammianus Marcellinus*, trans. by CD Yonge. Bohn's Classical Library, London, 1862. Page 317. ■ **6** - Gregory's Invectives are translated, with other material, in *Julian the Emperor*, trans. by CW King. Bohn's Classical Libraries, London, 1888. See pages 88-89.

RESURRECTIONS: A COLUMN BY MICHAEL T. SHOEMAKER

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE MAGNETIC CLOUD

The story about the *S.S. Mohican*'s alleged encounter with a luminous, magnetic cloud is one of the most sensational and least researched cases in fortean literature. *Fortean Times* [**FT37** p3] reprinted the tale from the July 1963 *Fate*, which in turn listed *The Maui News* of August 13 1904 as a source. Jacques Vallee's *Passport to Magonia* also lists the incident with a one-paragraph summary in its appendix of cases [case 34, p187]. Vallee's citation is a secondary source: an unspecified 1908 issue of the *New York Herald*. But it has always been obvious that *The Maui News*'s account is also a reprint, for the story is datelined "Philadelphia, July 31". Yet it seems that no one has ever before searched for the original source, which, as often happens, provides intriguing new details.

The only primary source that I have been able to locate is *The Philadelphia Inquirer* of Monday, August 1 1904. The report appears on page 8, the editorial page, under the headline "ELECTRIC CLOUD ENVELOPED SHIP", and begins by saying, "When the British steamer *Mohican*, from Ibraila, Roumania, which reached this port on Saturday, was making for the Delaware breakwater, it had a most remarkable experience..." After two summary paragraphs we are given Captain Urquhart's own account, which is "vouched for by every man of the crew."

'It was shortly after the sun had gone,' [Urquhart] said, 'and we were in latitude 37 degrees 16 minutes and longitude 72 degrees 48 minutes. The sea was almost as level as a parlor carpet and scarcely a breeze ruffled the water. It was slowly growing dark when the lookout saw a strange gray cloud in the southeast. At first it appeared as a speck on the horizon, but it rapidly came nearer and was soon as large as balloon. [sic]

'It had a peculiar gray tinge, and as it bore down upon us we saw bright glowing spots in its mass. A mile away we perceived that it rose several hundred feet above the level of the sea and was almost that broad. It rolled over the sea toward us, the glowing spots becoming more and more vivid. Suddenly the cloud enveloped the ship, and the most remarkable phenomena took place. The Mohican *suddenly blazed forth like a ship on fire, and from stem to stern and topmast to keel everything was tinged with the strange glow. The seamen were in terror when they found themselves looking as if they had been immersed in hell fire. Their hair stood straight on end, not from the fright so much as from the magnetic power of the cloud.*

'They rushed about the deck in consternation, and the more they rushed about the more excited they became I tried to calm them, but the situation was beyond me. I looked at the needle and it was flying around like an electric fan. I ordered several of the crew to move some iron chains that were lying on the deck, thinking that it would distract their attention. But what was the surprise to find that the sailors could not budge the chains, although they did not weigh more than seventy-five pounds each. Everything was magnetized, and chains, bolts, spikes and bars were as tight on the deck as if they had been riveted there.

'The cloud was so dense that it was impossible for the vessel to proceed. I could not see beyond the decks, and it appeared as if the whole world was a mass of glowing fire. The frightened sailors fell on the decks and prayed. I never saw anything so terrifying in the years I have been at sea. The hair on our heads and in our beards stuck out like bristles on a pig. After we had been in the cloud for about ten minutes, we noticed that it became difficult to move our arms and legs, in fact, all the joints of the body seemed to stiffen.

'Then it was that my sea legs began to fail me for the first time. I've heard of phantom ships, and stories about the needle running wild, but shiver me if I had ever seen the like of that. For a half hour we were enveloped in that mysterious vapor. And for nearly all that time, after the sailors' first cries of fright had subsided, there was a great silence over everything that only added to the terror. I tried to talk, but the words refused to leave my lips. The density of the cloud was so great that it would not carry sound.

'Suddenly the cloud began to lift. The phosphorescent glow of the ship and the crew began to fade. It gradually died away and at the same time the stiffness left the hair. In a few minutes the cloud had passed over the vessel and we saw it moving off over the sea. It loomed above the water as a great gray mass, spotted like a leopard's back with the bright, glowing patches.

'The crew gradually regained their composure and whispered to one another. I went among them, telling that all danger was past and they slowly went about their work. When I ordered them to move the iron chains for the second time, the men had no trouble in lifting them from the deck and tossing them about. Then I took a look at the needle and it was pointing steadily toward the north, as if nothing had occurred. I have sailed the seas for many years, but I never encountered a cloud like that. It must have been composed of some magnetized substance, which at the same time was combined with phosphorus.'

I am 99% convinced that this report is the original source for the story, because I have been unable to find any other reference to the incident. I searched all the Philadelphia newspapers available at the Library of Congress for reports, editorials, and letters - namely *The Evening Bulletin*, *Philadelphia Evening Item*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *The Philadelphia Record*, and *The Public Ledger*, for July 14 through August 14; and *The North American* and *The Philadelphia Press* for July 23 through August 8. In addition, the shipping columns of the *Bulletin*, *Inquirer*, *Ledger*, *Press*, and *Record* were thoroughly examined for the period July 14 through August 1.

This search has uncovered important details. Some of these details favor the story's credibility, while others raise puzzling questions. All the shipping columns agree that the *Mohican* was a real British steamer, commanded by Captain Urquhart, and owned by the Atlantic Transport Co. *The Public Ledger* (July 14, "Freights and Charters," p15) adds the fact that the ship was 1,620 tons.

However, the *Mohican* did *not* arrive in Philadelphia on Saturday, July 30, but in fact *departed* that day. It was listed as "cleared" on July 29, but this refers to the customs inspection, rather than the departure date. An examination of the shipping columns shows that ships sailed the day after they "cleared." Indeed, we can be sure that the *Mohican* left on the 30th because it passed the Marcus Hook (Penn.) checkpoint, a short distance from Philadelphia, at either 12.47 p.m. or 2.00 p.m. (papers disagree) on the 30th, and it "passed out" of the Delaware Breakwater on the 31st.

The ship was *bound* for Braila (Ibraila), Roumania, with an historic cargo. *The Philadelphia Record* (July 30) ran a small front-page story headlined "Machinery for Roumania", which began: "The first shipment of American machinery to Roumania will be taken out by the British steamer *Mohican*, which cleared the Custom House yesterday for Braila..." The story continues with talk of oil refining equipment and Roumanian oil, but makes no mention of the cloud incident. This omission is meaningless, however, since the report is clearly based only on the charter notice and not on any personal interview.

Where the *Mohican* came from and when it arrived in Philadelphia are questions that remain unanswered. The shipping columns do not list its arrival or movements, although *The Philadelphia Record* of July 14 (p11) noted: "The ultimate destination of the greater part of the cargo of the British steamship *Mohican*, which is expected here soon, will be Brail..." But how soon is "soon"? Ships generally stayed in port only a few days, and rarely more than a week. An arrival date before the 23rd seems doubtful, unless the extra time between arrival and departure was due to the cloud incident. This note also leaves in doubt the ship's previous port. Would one cargo be shipped twice across the Atlantic (e.g. from Britiain to Braila via

Philadelphia, where it picked up additional cargo)? Or does "ultimate destination...of the cargo" refer to the new cargo to be picked up in Philadelphia? The latter appears to be the case, because *The Philadelphia Press* (July 14, p9) said the *Mohican* "has been chartered to load a *full cargo* of machinery and oil *at this port* for Ibrail..." (Emphasis added.) This means it is possible that the *Mohican* was indeed coming *from* Braila, as the cloud report said, and would be going back again, presumably with other stops on the way.

The absence of an arrival notice for the *Mohican* is most extraordinary. Since all the newspapers that were consulted failed to list it, the error obviously lies with the port authorities. This omission, although a minor piece of indirect evidence, suggests that the cloud incident may be true. When the ship came into port, the story may have created enough excitement to cause a clerk to leave it off the daily list. (At the same time, it is a little surprising that the newspapers did not learn of the story right away.)

The *Maui News* report appears to be just an edited version of the *Inquirer* report, for the phrasing of the opening paragraphs is the same. If both derived from another source, I would expect an attribution and/or dateline in the *Inquirer*, which has none. The July 31 dateline in the *News* suggests the possibility that the story was received by cable, but the August 13 publication strongly indicates that the story came from a newspaper which took that long to get to Hawaii. I believe the explanation for the dateline is that the editor of the *News* backdated the item. He would know that the *Inquirer*'s August 1 story had to have been written at least the day before, because the *Inquirer* was a morning paper; or his intention may have been to indicate the presumed interview date (see below).

There is, however, one significant difference between the reports. The *Inquirer* says "which reached this port on Saturday," while the *News* says "which was in this port today" (i.e. the 31st). The *News*'s dating error appears to be an editorial blunder in converting "Saturday" to "today" in conjunction with an incorrect, added dateline. The motivation for such a change is consistent with editorial practice, for different papers have different styles. More important is the difference between "reached this port" and "was in this port". If the *Inquirer* reporter actually wrote the latter, then our principal cause for suspicion -- the false claim that the *Mohican* arrived on Saturday -- disappears. It is quite possible that "was in this port" appeared in an earlier edition of the August 1 *Inquirer*, and that some editor changed it to "reached" for a later edition because he thought that sounded more definite, or assumed that was what the reporter meant, or to conceal the fact that the incident must have been several days old.

Other explanations for the *Inquirer*'s mistake are also possible. Most likely is that the reporter misunderstood what Urquhart told him, or misread his notes, and got things backwards. (For example, if Urquhart said, "we've already cleared customs," the reporter may have *assumed* they had just arrived.) It is also conceivable that the story was written the week before and that "Saturday" refers to July 23. Publication may have been deliberately delayed until after the ship had sailed, if the editor feared that the story might be false, but liked it too much to kill it.

Some extraordinary thunderstorm activity during this period lends credibility to the cloud story by showing that the local atmosphere was in an unusual state. An extremely severe storm from the south hit Delaware, southern New Jersey, and eastern Pennsylvania on the evening of July 28. A surprising number of people -- at least six -- and buildings were struck by lightning, while a rare tornado hit Doylestown, Pennsylvania. Another terrible storm hit the Delaware River area on the afternoon of August 1 and generated two ball-lightning incidents. In Chester, Pennsylvania, "The roof of the stable at the Lewis Crozer Hospital was raised [by lightning]...while balls of fire circled through the corridors." (*Philadelphia Record*, Aug. 2, p1) To the north, "A ball of fire that descended, just in advance of the storm clouds at noon today [Aug. 1], near Pattenburg, N.J., broke between the heads of a team of valuable horses owned by Magee Brothers, Easton, killing both animals." (*Public Ledger*, Aug. 2, p4) ("Name Game" enthusiasts will note that Magee is one of the "significant surnames" listed in Jim Brandon's *The Rebirth of Pan*.)

Three facts induce serious doubts about the story's truthfulness: the false statement regarding the *Mohican*'s arrival, the fact that the reporter must have interviewed Urquhart at the last possible moment (on the morning of the 30th), and the report's publication after the ship had left. But these doubts are balanced by several arguments against a hoax hypothesis. To attribute the story to a real Captain and ship is to risk a law-suit for no good reason, which makes a newspaper hoax most unlikely. Moreover, the *Inquirer* would not want to risk its credibility as the leading newspaper in Philadelphia by perpetrating a pointless hoax. We have already seen that no other printed source appears to exist; and the idea that someone at dockside hoaxed the reporter requires us to believe that the reporter lied about his source, which would be an unparsimonious multiplication of villains. Thus we are left with Captain Urquhart as the only plausible hoaxer. Seamen do tell yarns, of course, but it is hard to believe that a Captain would risk his reputation and position in such a way for no apparent reason. And what of the report's statement that the crew vouched for the story? Was the crew conspiring in the hoax, or did the reporter lie rather than make at least some effort to check?

The complete lack of any subsequent contradiction, ridicule, or even mention of the story in all the sources examined is the most persuasive argument against the hoax hypothesis. Competition among newspapers was fierce in those days, and the papers routinely attacked and ridiculed each other, so such an easy opportunity to undermine the credibility of the *Inquirer* could hardly have been missed. If the story was checked by a rival and found to be true, the rival would not want to run a story of its own.

Although I remain disturbed by the suspicious aspects of the story, I am slightly inclined to think that the story is true.

Arthur Conan Doyle and "*The Lost World* Effect".

by Mark Chorvinsky

There is a delightful incident little-known in Fortean circles that involves modern dinosaurs, lost worlds, fantastic reality, Harry Houdini, Arthur Conan Doyle, a cast of magical luminaries, a cinematic landmark, and the editorial staff of the **New York Times**. The histories of cinema and conjuring are inextricably interwoven (1) and a look at a most unusual magic/cinema show that I have dubbed "**The Lost World** Effect", points out many of the interconnections between stage illusion, cinema, special effects, and Forteana.

In June, 1922, Arthur Conan Doyle embarked on an extensive lecture tour to promote spiritualism. When in New York he was invited by his friend Harry Houdini, then president of the Society of American Magicians, to attend the June 2, 1922 meeting of the New York chapter of the SAM. Doyle initially refused his rationalistic friend's offer as he was used to magicians making light of his belief in spiritualism. Doyle changed his mind at the last minute and appeared at the Hotel McAlpin with his friend Adolph S. Ochs, publisher of the **New York Times**. Many magical greats performed their finest feats that evening, including Houdini and his famous *Metamorphosis* Illusion, wherein the conjuror is locked in a trunk and rapidly changes places with an assistant standing atop the padlocked trunk. After the magic acts, Doyle was introduced to the prestidigitators and displayed some photographs of fairies and spirit ectoplasm. Then the lights were lowered and a movie projector and screen were set up.

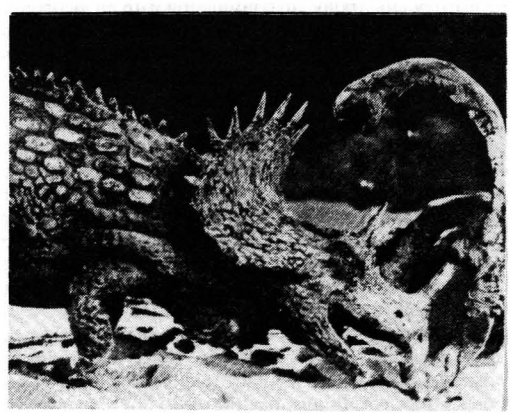
Doyle explained to the assembled illusionists that he would screen a film but would answer no questions about it. (After all, do conjurors perform an effect and then take questions?) Instead, he chose to present a tantalizingly brief introduction to the cinematic excursion into fantastic reality. Unlike the "patter" of most, if not all illusionists, Doyle's clever opening remarks were true- ambiguous to those who did not know the whole story, but true:

These pictures are not occult, but they are psychic because everything that emanates from the human spirit or human brain is psychic. It is not supernatural; nothing is. It is preternatural in the sense that it is not known to our ordinary senses. It is the effect of the joining on the one hand of imagination, and on the other hand of some power of materialisation. The imagination, I may say, comes from me- the materialising power from elsewhere.(2)

After Doyle's introduction, a reel of film was shown that amazed the magicians. When the lights went out the screen was filled with dinosaurs cavorting about in an extremely lifelike manner. The film had no titles and, true to his word, there was no narration, explanation or further comment of any kind that evening by Doyle. The magicians watched, astounded.

The next day there was an article on the front page of the **Times** that described detailed saurian scenes:

Prehistoric brutes that resembled rhinoceroses magnified many times, equipped with enormous horns that pointed forward like those of the unicorn, drove dinosaurs away...One monster, like a horned toad of monumental proportions, presented an impenetrable surface



A styracosaur fights a young brontosaurus in the groundbreaking 1925 film **The Lost World**

of armor plate to attacking reptiles and moved along in safety...His [Doyle's] *monsters of the ancient world or of the new world he has discovered in the ether, were extraordinarily lifelike. If fakes, they were masterpieces.* (3)

Doyle could have been a master magician-and perhaps, in the final analysis, he was. His misdirection that evening was superb, his techniques revolutionary, the effect unlike any ever presented to a group of magicians before or since.

After Doyle woke up to find that the next morning's **Times** had a front page story about his "performance" the night before, he decided that he had better explain the origin of the mystery film. The newspaper was not certain whether Doyle was "making merry"or "lifting the veil". He sent Houdini the following note:

My dear Houdini,

My cinema interlude upon the occasion of the magician's dinner should, I think, be explained, now that its purpose was fulfilled. The purpose was, simply, to provide a little mystification to those who so often and so successfully mystified others.

In presenting my moving dinosaurs I had to walk warily in my speech, so as to preserve the glamour and yet say nothing which I could not justify as literally true. But I was emphatic that it was not occult and only psychic, in so far as things human come from a man's spirit.

It was preternatural in the sense that it was not nature as we know it. All my other utterances were, as I think you will agree, within the actual facts.

The dinosaurs and other monsters have been constructed by pure cinema, but of the highest kind, and are being used for ***The Lost World*** *picture which represents prehistoric life upon a South American plateau.*

Having such material at hand and being allowed by the courtesy of Watterston Rothacker to use it, I could not resist the temptation to surprise your associates and guests. I am sure they will forgive me if for a few short hours I had them guessing.

And now, Mr. Chairman, confidence begets confidence and I want to know how you got out of that trunk.

Yours sincerely,
Arthur Conan Doyle (4)

The motion picture that tricked the tricksters was a test reel of Willis O'Brien's special effects work for the film of Doyle's novel **The Lost World.** O' Brien, the special effects genius who would be responsible for the creation of **King Kong,** was perfecting the technique of dimensional or stop-motion animation. This process involves the creation of model creatures which are placed into miniature environments and are moved in tiny increments, a frame of film exposed for each position the dinosaur is in, 24 frames resulting in one second of animation. It was O'Brien that Doyle referred to when he said that the power of materialisation came "from elsewhere". The reel Doyle showed to the magicians was the result of two years of non-stop testing by O'Brien and his brilliant crew. The dinosaurs that fooled many of the world's greatest magicians were actually made of metal and latex and averaged eighteen inches long!

REFERENCES and NOTES

• 1- I would make the case that stage magic and cinema are intrinsically Fortean. (See Eric Barnouw, *The Magician and the Cinema,* , 1981).

• 2- Doyle letter to Houdini cited in Don Shay, 'Willis O' Brien - Creator of the Impossible' in *Cinefex* (Number 7, January, 1972) p17.

• 3- Ibid, p18.

• 4- Orville Goldner and George E. Turner, *The Making of King Kong,* (Ballantine Books, New York, 1975) p 46.

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THE OLD COUNTESS OF DESMOND

AND OTHER EXAMPLES OF NATURAL REJUVENATION IN OLD AGE

by Paul Sieveking.

In old age, we are supposed to enter a second childhood; sometimes, according to many diverse records, this can actually take physiological form. Last issue **[FT47]** I wrote about Shigechiyo Izumi, who died in February 1986 at the undisputed age of 120 years and 237 days. After he had turned a hundred, his white hair returned to black at his temples, a phenomenon tagged anamelanism. (Seven years before his death, he won a suit against a "long life" shochu [sugar cane liquor] manufacturer, and was awarded 1,500 bottles a year. How much of this he drank himself is not known. *The Statesman,* India, 14 Nov 1979.)

Triple dentition is the most common form of bodily renewal in old age. Rolleston **(1922)** said that "The numerous reputed instances of a third dentition can be explained only by the appearance of a previously buried tooth through the atrophying gums, for a genuine third dentition would necessitate the presence of dental germs which do not exist." However, Gould and Pyle **(1897) [1]** mention 24 cases from the medical literature, among them an account of a country labourer who lost all his teeth at 60 and grew a whole new set a few months later **[2];** an old woman who grew 12 molars at the age of 98 **[3];** the grandfather of a Dr Slare, a native of Bedfordshire, who retained all his second teeth to the age of 80, when they fell out, a new set appearing after 5 years and lasting till his death at 100 (his hair went white at 80 but grew darker afterwards) **[4];** and, most remarkably, "a German account of a woman of 90 who had dentition at 47 and 67, each time a new set of teeth appearing; Hunter and Petrequin have observed similar cases...Lison makes a curious observation of a sixth dentition." **[5]**

Harcouet de Longeville **(1715)** gave the following cases, translated by Eugenius Philalethes **(1722):**

> "*Valescus Tarentatius* speaks of an Abbess of *Morvedro,* formerly *Sagunthum,* in the Kingdom of *Valencia* in *Spain,* whose Decrepitude was changed into a brilliant Youth, her Teeth grew white, her Hair black and thick, the Wrinkles of her Forehead disappeared, her Breasts heaved up as at twenty; this Woman was a second time young and handsome.
>
> "*Lorichius* tells us of an old man who lost his white hair, beard and old skin through illness; some months later his head was covered with new fair hair, and a smooth beard grew.
>
> "*Aulugellus* says that there was a Woman whose Name was *Victoria,* who at fourscore lost her bad Teeth with her grey Hair, a little after came a new Set of fine and handsome Teeth, and a beautiful Head of Hair.
>
> "*Pliny* has taken notice of a great many People, who in very advanced Ages have had new Teeth. He adds, that their white Hairs have been succeeded by those of the finest black in the World."

I cannot resist quoting the following over-the-top story from the Portuguese writer Giovanni Maffei **(1588),** confirmed by Ferdinand Lopez Castegueda, historiographer royal. Numas de Cugna, a native of Bengal, is supposed to have died in 1566, at the age of 370: "He was a person of great simplicity, and quite illiterate; but of so extensive a memory, that he was a kind of living chronicle, relating, distinctly and exactly, what had happened within his knowledge in the compass of his very long life, together with all the circumstances attending it. He had four new sets of teeth; and the colour of his hair and beard had been very frequently changed from black to grey, and from grey to black. He asserted, that in the course of his life he had seven hundred wives, some of whom died, and the others he had put away. The first century of his life passed in idolatry, from which he was converted to Mahometism, which he continued to profess to his death." **[Translation from Easton 1799].**

THE COUNTESS OF DESMOND

> Sir Walter Rawleigh, a most learned knight,
> Doth of an Irish countess, Desmond write,
> Of sevenscore years of age, he with her spake;
> The Lord St Alban's doth more mention make,
> That she was married in fourth Edward's reign;
> Thrice shed her teeth, which three times came again.

Thus warbles the Water Poet, John Taylor, in the pamphlet which immortalised Thomas Parr, *The Old, Old, Very Old Man* **(1635),** of which more another time. Biographical details on the Old Countess of Desmond are shrouded in Irish mist, and many embellishments accrued over the centuries, through faulty memory, inaccurate transcription and wishful thinking. I will

examine the saga as an object lesson in history-as-myth, something I have become familiar with in my job editing potted lives.

Sir John Harington spent some time in Ireland soon after 1584, and again (with Essex) in 1598/9, and wrote *A Short View of the State of Ireland* in **1605,** which was not however published until 1879. Speaking of the wholesomeness of the country, he says: "Where a man hath lyved above 140 yeer, a woman, and she a countes, above 120, the Cowntry ys lyke to be helthy..." The man mentioned here remains unidentified.

The earliest *published* record of the Countess is in Sir Walter Ralegh's *History of the World,* written sometime before 1612, while he was a prisoner in the Tower, and first published in **1614:**

> "I my selfe knew the old Countesse of *Desmond* of *Inchiquin* in *Munster,* who lived in the yeare 1589. and many yeares since, who was married in *Edward* the fourths time, and held her Joynture from all the Earles of *Desmond* since then; and that this is true, all the Noblemen and Gentlemen of *Munster* can witnesse".

Edward IV died on 9 April 1483; so Ralegh is implying that she was at least 122 when he met her. He had come to Ireland in 1580, as a captain in the Munster wars, was prominent in defeating the Spanish invading force, and in the war against the Desmonds. He was rewarded with about 12,000 acres of Desmond lands in Cork, Waterford and Tipperary, which he promptly settled with colonists from Devon and Somerset. He had a manor house (which still stands) in Youghal, though his biographer Edwards doubts the commonly-received statement that he was mayor of the town. He initiated the forest clearance which left the "Island of Woods" almost devoid of timber by the 18th century, and planted the first Irish potato in 1596. He had good reason for knowing that the Countess survived many years after 1589, because in that year and the year before he granted certain leases in Inchiquin and the environs of Youghal at a reduced rent pending the life of 'the ladie Cattelyn, old countess dowager of Desmond', who had a life-interest in the lands.

The next account appears in the *Itinery* of Fynes Moryson, published in **1617:** "In our time the Irish Countesse of Desmond, lived to the age of about 140 yeeres, being able to goe on foote foure or five miles to the Market Towne [i.e. Youghal], and using weekly so to doe in her last yeeres, and not many yeeres before shee died shee had all her teeth renewed." There is little doubt that when Moryson visited Youghal in 1613 he met people who had known her.

His account was used by Sir Francis Bacon, the 'Lord St Alban's' of Taylor's poem, in his *Historia Vitae et Mortis* **(1623):** "The Irish, especially the wild Irish, even at this day live very long; certainly they report that within these few years the Countess of Desmond lived to a hundred and forty years of age, and bred teeth three times *[et tres per vices dentiisse].*" In his *Sylva Sylvarum* or *Natural History,* published after his death by Dr W.Rawley in 1627, the account varies slightly: "They tell a Tale of the old *Countesse Desmond,* who lived till she was seven-score yeares old, that she did *Dentire,* twice, or thrice; Casting her old Teeth, and others Comming in their Place." Whether Bacon had access to accurate information that she only renewed two or three teeth instead of all of them as stated by Moryson, we have no way of knowing; perhaps he was merely playing down what he regarded as an inherently unlikely story. I suspect that Bacon's statement that she bred teeth three times (ie. grew three new teeth) was misread by the Water Poet to mean that she renewed *all* her teeth three times.

Her triple dentition is again mentioned in Thomas Fuller's *History of the Worthies of England* **(1662),** where he states that Bacon said she was 140 "at least": "All I will adde to this, had this happened in foreign parts, addicted to *Popery,* near the *shrine* of some *Saint, superstition* with *her sickle,* might have reaped a *great harvest* thereby." (This seems rather an odd sentiment, considering where the Countess lived!) Bishop Ussher, who was born in Dublin in 1581, says in his *Chronologia Sacra* **(1660):** "She was living and lively in my time *[Meo tempore et viva fuit et vivida]*"

Further details appear in the *Table-Book* of Robert Sidney, second Earl of Leicester (1595-1677), written about 1640 when he was Ambassador at Paris, and which lay unpublished in Penshurst Castle in Kent **(Nichols 1862).** Parts of it were transcribed by Dr Birch in 1749 **[6].** "[She] might have lived much longer had she not mett with a kinde of violent death; for she would needes climbe a nutt-tree, to gather nutts; so falling down she hurt her thighe, which brought a fever, and that fever brought death. This my cosin, Walter Fitzwilliam, told me. This olde lady, Mr Harriot told me, came to petition the Queen, and landing at Bristoll, she came on foot to London; being then soe olde that her daughter was decrepit, and not able to come with her, but was brought in a little cart, theyr poverty not allowing means for better provision; and, as I remember, Sir Walter Rawleigh in some part of his story speakes of her, and sayeth that he saw her in England in anno 1589."

Sidney's inaccurate recollection of Ralegh's *History* tends to cast doubt on the earlier anecdotes. 'Mr Harriot' (mistranscribed as Haniot and Harnet in various sources) was Thomas Harriot (1560-1621) whom Aubrey called "one of the best mathematicians then in the world". He had accompanied Ralegh to America, corresponded with Kepler, and is regarded as the father of modern algebra. He was a frequent visitor to Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, during his long imprisonment in the Tower (1606-21), at the same time as Ralegh. Ralegh was, however, released by King James in 1616 to search once again for El Dorado, came back empty-handed, and was executed in 1618, on the 15-year-old charge of treason. Sidney became son-in-law to Percy by marrying his daughter Dorothy. We shall examine the journey to London anecdote later.

Sir William Temple **(1689)** further confuses the story: "The late *Robert* Earl of *Leicester,* who was a Person of great Learning and Observation, as well as of Truth; told me [...] of a Countess of *Desmond,* married out of *England* in *Edward* the Fourth's Time; and who lived far in King *James* his Reign; and was

counted to have died some Years above a hundred and forty: at which Age she came from *Bristol* to *London,* to beg some relief at Court; having long been very poor, by the Ruin of that Irish Family into which she was married." Notice that now her marriage took place in England, her journey to London occurred in the reign of James, and her death was postponed. Ralegh had implied that she was well dead by 1612.

By the eighteenth century, about 14 country seats round England and Ireland boasted a portrait of the Old Countess. All but three were shown to be pictures of other women by Rembrandt and Gerard Douw. Horace Walpole showed that the one in Windsor Castle was Rembrandt's mother! There remained the one at Muckross Abbey, near Killarney in Kerry, a very similar picture in Dupplin Castle (illustrated on **facing page**) and a more dubious painting at Chatsworth. The Muckross portrait carries the following inscription:

> "Catherine, Countesse of Desmonde, AS SHE appeared at ye Court of Our Souraigne Lord KING JAMES in thys preasent yeare A.D.1614, and in ye 140th yeare of her Age. She came from BRISTOL to seek Reliefe ye HOUSE of DESMONDE having been ruined by Attainder. She was married in ye Reigne of KING EDWARD IV, and in ye Course of her long PILGRImage renewed her Teeth Twice. HER PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE is INCHIQUIN IN MUNSTER WHITHER SHE undauntedlye proposeth (her Purpose accomplished) incontinentlie TO RETURN. * *LAUS DEO.*"

Horace Walpole, a writer with as much charm and carelessness with facts as G.K.Chesterton, published an *Inquiry into the Person and Age of the long-lived Countess of Desmond* in **1758,** making her the wife of *James,* 12th Earl of Desmond, dying towards the *end* of James I's reign, aged between 145 and *162*! In 1768 he published his *Historic Doubts of the Life and Reign of King Richard III,* endeavouring to reverse the Tudor image of this monarch, immortalised by Shakespeare. In this he said: "With regard to the person of Richard, it appears to have been as much misrepresented as his actions [...] The old countess of Desmond, who had danced with Richard, declared that he was the handsomest man in the room except his brother Edward, and was very well made." Nichols **(1862)** was unable to find any earlier written record of this; Walpole claimed to have heard the story from his friend Mrs Cholmondeley, or her brother the old Lord St John, father of the great Lord Bolingbroke. Easton **(1799)** has her dancing with the Duke of *York,* while Richard, of course, was Duke of *Gloucester.* Sarah Hale **(1853)** wrote that "She had passed her hundredth year before she could refrain from dancing, or mingling in gay assemblies." Walpole at one time has her dying after a fall from a cherry tree, at another from a walnut tree.

Thomas Moore (1779-1852), the bard of Erin, in his *Letters of the Fudge Family* **(1818)** relates:

> That she lived to much more than a hundred and ten
> And was killed by a fall from a cherry tree then;
> What a frisky old girl!

Cherries from that part of Ireland had become famous by the 18th century, having been first planted there by Ralegh, who brought them from the Canaries. A final variation comes in Thomas Crofton Croker **(1824):** "Her death is attributed to a fall whilst in the act of picking an apple from a tree in an orchard at Drumana."

The Old Countess Folk Myth was now complete, and was paraphrased in numerous penny cyclopaedias and books of wonders. No-one seemed to know her name or which Earl of Desmond she was married to; Sir William Betham, the Ulster King at Arms, was still puzzling over her identity in the 1830's **(Sainthill 1861),** even though she had been identified, for the first time in print, over 80 years earlier, as Catherine, wife of Thomas, 13th [more conventionally 12th] Earl of Desmond, who died in 1534 **(Smith 1750).**

The myth was eroded by a series of Victorian researchers, but rather than outlining their findings here, I refer the interested reader to Sainthill, Nichols and Hardinge. I will conclude with what can be said with some certainty about the Old Countess and her family.

Thomas FitzGerald, the 8th Earl of Desmond, great-grandson of the 1st Earl, returned in 1464 from the Court of Edward IV as Lord Liutenant of Ireland, but was accused of treason and executed at Drogheda in 1467. He had (at least) four sons, James, Maurice, Thomas and John. James became 9th Earl, married Margaret O'Brien, and was assassinated at the age of 28 in 1487 "at the stoke of a bullet" by order of his brother John. Maurice succeeded as 10th Earl, and died in 1520, leaving issue James, the 11th Earl, who died in 1529. On 18 June the dignity then reverted to Thomas, known as *Maol,* or the Bald, who was distinguished in the sanguinary annals of his country as one of its most warlike chieftains: in 1534, the 80th and last year of his life, it was said of him (in a dispatch of the Earl of Surrey) that "albeit his years requireth quietness and rest, yet intendeth he as much trouble as ever did any of his nation." His first wife was Shela/Giles/Julia, daughter of Cormac McCarthy, who built Blarney Castle and was slain in battle by his son-in-law. The Earl's second wife was his cousin Katherine (Cattelyn/Kauthleen/Kathrin etc) who was the Old Countess.

Katherine's father was Sir John FitzGerald, Lord of Decies, nephew of the 8th Earl of Desmond, and her mother was Ellen, daughter of John FitzGibbon, the White Knight. She was born, it is supposed, at the principal seat of the Decies branch of the Geraldines at Dromana, Co. Waterford, sometime between 1464 **(Sainthill 1861, Casey 1877)** and 1510 **(Cokayne 1887).** Macray in *DNB* suggests about 1500. Her husband was born in 1454 **(Cokayne).**

Much has been made of a lease of lands for 5 years, granted by Gerald FitGerald, 8th Earl of Kildare (d.1513), to *'Gilis Ny Cormyk'* [i.e. Shela McCarthy] in '20 Henry VII' (1505), not '20 Henry VIII' (1528) as misread by Nichols, and used by the arch-sceptic Thoms. This shows that the Earl's first wife was alive in 1505, and Macray **(1889)** and Gould **(1927)** have inferred from this that Katherine cannot have been

married before this date. Sainthill, however, argues that it is very unlikely that Shela would have taken any lease if she was still Lady Desmond; or that the Earl of Kildare would not have required the lease to have been taken by Sir Thomas, or at least made him party to it. He puts forward ample evidence that "the custom and licence in Ireland in Sir Thomas of Desmond's period sanctioned a man in 'putting awaie' his wife and taking unto himself another and another (as in the instance of the Earl of Clanricarde, who had three wives living at the time of his death)." He thus argues that Katherine could have been married in Edward IV's reign after all, although she could not have become Countess before 1526 when her husband succeeded to the title. Ralegh is to this extent proved innaccurate, in that she could not have 'held her jointure' from all the Earls since the 1480's.

Elizabeth Casey **(1877)** states quite firmly, on what authority I don't know, that the Earl's marriage to Katherine took place in 1483. Nichols assumes the marriage to have taken place in 1529, the year that Earl Thomas granted the County of Decies, in perpetuity, to Katherine's father, which he assumes was part of the matrimonial contract. It might equally, of course, be connected with Thomas's assumption of the Earldom that same year. Within six months the Earl's son Maurice (by his first wife) died of the plague.

Katherine bore the Earl a daughter, Katherine, who later married Philip Barry Oge. Gould observes that a vigorous husband of 80 is very rare, and concludes that the marriage must have occurred before 1524. Possibly some further documents have been unearthed in the last 60 years; I would welcome any information from historians.

Thomas *Maol* died at Rathkeale, Co. Waterford, in 1534, and was buried in Youghal. Katherine retired to the castle in Inchiquin with its round tower of 12-foot-thick walls, and lived there for 70 years, as shown by records from 1575 and the years 1588 to 1591. She died in 1604, according to Sir George Carew's manuscript pedigree, generally considered as accurate. [7] She had lived anything from 104 to seven-score years.

During the 70 years of her widowhood, the house of Desmond was all but destroyed. Thomas should have been succeeded by his grandson James, educated at the English Court; but his patrimony was seized by his grand-uncle John, the brother of Thomas, who had arranged the murder of their eldest brother almost 50 years earlier. The wicked old fratricide died in 1536, and his younger son James became 14th Earl, having murdered his English-educated cousin. James died quietly in his bed in 1558, and was succeeded by his son Gerald (Garrett) as the 15th Earl, "the last great Earl of Desmond" **(Thoms)**. In 1579 he was proclaimed a traitor by military law and murdered in 1583 for the price set on his head. His vast estates - some 600,000 acres - were invested in the Crown by Act of Parliament, and divided among his English victors, including Ralegh.

Sainthill makes out a very good case that the Countess who journeyed to London in 1586 or 1587 **(Cokayne 1916)**, as described by Thomas Harriot, was not Katherine, who was secure at Inchiquin, but Elenor, nee Butler, the wife of Gerald, who would certainly be in dire straits by then. Hardinge discovered that the Queen granted a pension of 100 Irish pounds to this Countess in 1587, and lesser pensions to her sisters-in-law, Jane, Ellen and Elizabeth FitzGerald. These pensions were stopped when James ascended the throne in March 1603, which might have occasioned another visit by the Countess. At all events, her pension was restored in 1604, and paid until 1638. The pensions to the three sisters were restored in 1606, and paid until 1641, when further rebellion extinguished law, order and the royal and public revenues.

Ralegh had sold nearly all of his Irish estates in 1602 to Richard Boyle (1566-1643), afterwards the first and great Earl of Cork, who might have threatened the security of the aged Countess Katherine, necessitating a journey to London to petition King James; this would accord with the Muckross inscription, if 1614 is regarded as a mistake for 1604. This might also explain how her portrait came to be painted, as family portraiture was virtually unheard of in Ireland until the Cromwellians, and not widespread until the mid 18th century **(Sainthill)**. On the other hand, it seems extremely unlikely that the visit of such a venerable person to the English Court should not be recorded by any contemporary observer; both Ralegh and Bacon were in

The Countess of Desmond, published in **Rolleston [1922],** who fails to identify the portrait. Judging from the description in **Nichols [1862],** it is engraved from the portrait in Dupplin Castle.

London at the time. Some maintained she died in London, like Old Parr 31 years later; but what about that nut tree? Harriot's anecdote of the journey to London probably referred to Countess Elenor and one of her sisters-in-law, and it was Sidney who confused the Countesses - or Harriot who misled Sidney. This of course throws doubt on Katherine's supposed portraits. Much of history, apparently so substantial, turns out to be hearsay and assertion.

A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF BODILY RENEWAL

● **JOHN BALDECK,** Abbot of Kilchberg, d.1348 aged 185(?). He cut new teeth in his old age, and his grey hair turned black. He is buried in Munster, in the canton of Lucerne in Switzerland. **[Kirby 1815]**

● **KATHERINE FITZGERALD,** Countess of Desmond, d.1604 aged c.120(?) **[See text].**

● **MRS MILLS.** "One goodwife Mills of Yatton Keynel, a tenant of my father's did dentire in the 88 yeare of her age, which was about the yeare 1645." **[Aubrey 1685]**

● **PATRICK MACELWAIN,** b. Whithorn, Galloway, Scotland, 1546, d. after Oct. 1657, minister of Lesbury, near Alnwick, cut two new teeth at the age of 107, and one a year or so later; grew a new head of flaxen hair like a child's; and after 40 years of poor eyesight, he could, at the age of 110, read the tiniest print. He sired 5 children after the age of 80. **[Fuller 1662** wrongly named him as Machell Vivan, and **Bailey 1857** as Patrick Makel Wian. **Nichols 1862** gives the correct version.]

● **FRANCIS HONGO,** surnamed **HUPPAZOLI,** Venetian consul in Smyrna, d.1702 aged 113. Never sick, teetotal, walked 8 miles a day. Retained all his senses to the last. His white hair fell out when he was about 100, and was succeeded by a crop of its original colour, and he cut two new teeth at 112. **[Bailey 1857]**

● **JANE HOOK** of Belfast, aged 112, "had lately all her old stumps drove out by a new set of teeth; which were more welcome, because the Account affirms her Appetite and other faculties are as good as when she was but 20." **[Gent's Mag July 1731.]**

● **MARY HOW** of Mapleton, Derbyshire, d.15 July 1751 aged 112, by pulling apples from a tree, when one of the branches fell on her arm and broke it. About two years before, she cut several new teeth, and her hair changed its colour. **[Easton 1799]**

● **JOHN DARTNELL** of Bordeaux, gardener, d.1758 aged 110. At 86 he went blind, but recovered his sight by couching at the age of 106. **[Kirby 1820]**

● **LADY ANGELIQUE DOMENGRIEUX DE SEMPE** of Noniliac in France, d.1759 aged 103. Cut several new teeth when nearly 90. **[Easton 1799]**

● **JOSEPH RUDGE** of Newent, Glos., d.1764 aged 107. Some time before his death he lost the nails of his hands and feet, and afterwards had new ones, the same in texture as those of an infant. **[Bailey 1857]**

● **PHILIP LAROQUE** of Frie in Gascony, butcher, d.1768 aged 102. A notorious drunkard till he was 100. Cut four large teeth at the age of 92. **[Easton 1799]**

● **MR MAZARELLA** of Vienna, d.1774 aged 105. A few months before his death he had several new teeth, and his grey hair returned to its original black. **[Easton 1799]**

● **SUSAN EDMONDS** of Winterbourne, Hants, d.1780 aged 104. Five years before her death, her hair turned brown, and began to turn grey again a few months before her death. **[Easton 1799]**

● **MARGARET MELVIL,** widow, of Ketle, Fife, d.1783 aged 117. She had 37 great-grandchildren. Renewed several teeth after her 100th year, and was never ill. **[Kirby 1820, Bailey 1857]**

● **JANET ALLEN,** of Kilmarnock, Ayreshire, d.1788 aged 105. About 4 years earlier, her sight, which had long been dim, returned considerably. She went to kirk and market until a few days before her death. **[Easton 1799]**

● **MARION GIBSON** of Galston, d.1789 aged 100. Had a new set of teeth at about 90. **[Easton 1799]**

● **MRS PRICE** of Rusholme, near Manchester, d.1791 at "a very advanced age". She had been confined to bed for nearly a year, during which time she cut two new teeth and her hair, which had been grey many years, returned to its natural colour. **[Gent's Mag Mar 1791.]**

● **ADAM RIFFLE** living near Reading, PA, aged 84 in 1792. Gradually lost his sight in his 68th year and was totally blind for 12 years. His sight returned about 1788. **[Rush 1793.]**

● **REBECCA PONEY,** d.1795 in the poor house, North Falgate liberty, aged 106. Born 5 Nov 1688, the day King William landed. Cut two new teeth at the age of 102, and had a perfect set, except for two, at the time of her death. **[Easton 1799]**

● **JOHN WEEKS** of New London, Connecticut, d.1798 aged 114. At 106, married his tenth wife, aged 16. His grey hair had been renewed by dark hair and he had cut several new teeth. **[Easton 1799]**

● **ALICE,** a black slave, born in Philadelphia in about 1686, to parents born in Barbados. Aged 10, she was moved by her master to Dunks Ferry, about 17 miles up the Delaware River, where she remained for the rest of her life. Her sight dimmed when she was 95, and she went totally blind and lost her last tooth at 100. As she had to give up her usual labour, she took up fishing. She would frequently row herself to the middle of the stream, from which she seldom returned without a handsome supply of fish for her master's table. Her sight returned two years later, so that she could perceive moving objects, though not people. She died in Bristol, PA, in 1802, at the age of 116. **[Eccentric Biography 1804, Kirby 1804, Wilson 1806, Mott 1826]**

● **ELIZABETH SPENCER,** widow, d.1806, aged 105. Blind for many years, she recovered her sight about her 100th year, and had it until her death. **[Bailey 1857]**

● **HANNAH WILSON,** widow, of Keswick, Cumberland, d.1807 aged 104. Cut two new teeth after 85. **[Bailey 1857]**

● **RICHARD WILLIAMS** of Roddewrem, in the parish of Heneglwys, Anglesea, d.1809 aged 103. He

had been blind for six years, but his sight was restored a short while before his death. He also cut four new teeth. **[Bailey 1857]**

● **SARAH WILLIAMS,** widow, of Brent Torr, near Tavistock, d.1809 aged 108. When about 100, she cut 5 new teeth; 2 fell out, but the other 3, with 9 or 10 old ones, remained till her death. **[Kirby 1820]**

● **THOMAS LAUGHER [right]**, known as Old Tommy, b. Markley, Worcs, 6 Jan 1700; d. 1812 aged 112. A wine and liquor merchant in Tower Street, he was bankrupted by the failure of Neele, Fordyce and James, losing £198,000, which so affected him that he became blind and speechless and his skin peeled from the whole of his body. Some years later, after a severe illness at the age of 80, he grew a fresh head of hair and new nails on his fingers and toes. His hair was thick and flowing, grey on the outside but brown underneath. His principal subsistance was coffee, tea, bread and spring water; he never touched beer or spirits, or any animal food, except milk. He had a son called Thomas, who looked much older than he did, sometimes being mistaken for his father! Thomas Jr. died at the age of 80, before his father. **[Lemoine 1812, Kirby 1820, Wilson 1820]**

● **JAMES BLUCK** of Terroughtie, New Brunswick, d.1814, aged 111. A few weeks before his death he cut an entire new set of teeth. **[Bailey 1857]**

● **JANE LEWSON** [portrayed on **p70**], d. 28 May 1816, aged 116(?), is said to have cut new teeth at the age of 87, and never had toothache. She was allegedly born in Essex Street, Strand (London), in 1700, her maiden name being Vaughan. She was left fairly well off after the death of her merchant husband in 1726, lived alone for the rest of her life in a large house, No 12 Coldbath Square, and for the last 30 years had only one servant. To her death she retained the gold-headed cane, dress and manners of the time of George I, being always attired "with ruffs, and cuffs, and fardingales, and things." She was widely known as Lady Lewson.

Her terror of catching cold led her to forbid the use of water in her house, with the result that the windows and walls became completely encrusted with dirt. "As to cleaning the windows, she observed, that many accidents happened through that ridiculous practice: the glass might be broke, the person might be wounded, and the expense would fall upon her to repair them." **(Wilson 1820)**. Her large garden, however, was always kept in good order.

She lubricated her face and hands with hog's lard, over which she daubed her cheeks with rose pink. She always sat in her favourite chair, and would only drink tea out of her favourite cup. She was equally particular with respect to knives, forks and plates. She avoided drugs and doctors, and enjoyed excellent health until her death. She was buried in Bunhill Fields. It is thought that her peculiarities suggested to Dickens Miss Haversham's environment in Great Expectations. **[Wilson 1820,** *DNB*]

● **SIR CHARLES CAMERON,** in his autobiography **(1921),** recorded that his white hair returned to its normal colour after an accident confined him to bed for some months in his 80th year. He also refers to a man

Thomas Laugher, 'Old Tommy', at the age of 111, from an engraving published by **R.S.Kirby [1819].**

of 90 having his hair return to its natural brown. **[Rolleston 1922]**

● **ALEC MARRIOTT,** 64, of Postland, Lincs, cut a new tooth in 1979, 42 years after all his teeth were extracted. **[8]**

● **LUO SHIJAN,** a Chinese peasant born in 1881, grew a new set of teeth at the age of 100, 11 on top and 16 on the bottom. She didn't smoke or drink, and lived on a mountainside. **[9]**

● **TAHERA KHATUN,** a woman of 110 in Bangladesh, grew a new set of teeth in 1982 after being toothless for 50 years. **[10]**

As a postscript, here's a case of extremely *early* dentition. Philip Tancock was born with a tooth. His mother, Carole, of Petersfield in Hampshire, handed the three-day-old boy to the woman in the next bed who was a dentist, and the tooth was removed with a pair of tweezers. **[11]**

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Jane Lewson, from an engraving by R.Cooper in **Wilson [1830].**

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NOTES

■ **[1]** I have noticed two mistakes in Gould and Pyle's paragraph on triple dentition (p.243). The dentition of Dr Slare's grandfather is attributed to a Dr Slave (G & P's source is a French medical dictionary which might be responsible for the error. See *Transactions of the Royal Soc.* vol xxviii.). And a case, from *Edinburgh Medical Commentaries,* is quoted twice, with slight differences, under Bisset and Bassett. Luckily, G & P is prodigiously referenced from 747 sources, and remains a wonderfully useful textbook. ■ **[2]** *Medical and Philosophical Commentaries,* iii,105. Lond. 1784. ■ **[3]** Bisset (?Basset) in *Medical Commentaries,* viii,370. Lond.1787. ■ **[4]** *Dict. des sciences medicales,* vol.iv. Paris 1812, etc. ■ **[5]** *Bulletin gen. de therapeutique med. et chir.* Vol. xiii, p.90. Paris. ■ **[6]** Dr Birch's transcription of the *Table-Book* is Ms *Addit. Brit. Mus.* 4161, p.253. ■ **[7]** Manuscript pedigree by Sir George Carew (1555-1629), Earl of Totnes and president of Munster 1600-03. (Lambeth Library *No.626.f.74.b.*): "Catherine ma: to Thomas Fitz Thomas Er: of Desmond: 3 son to Thomas Er: of Desmond beheaded att Drogheda. She died in ano 1604." ■ **[8]** *D.Express* 5 Mar 1979. ■ **[9]** Shanghai newspaper, quoted by [AP]. *Standard, Shropshire Star,* Wolverhampton *Express & Star* 6 April; *Guardian* 7 April 1982. ■ **[10]** *Banglar Bani* newspaper, quoted by [UPI] Houston (TX) *Chronicle* 17 June 1982. ■ **[11]** *D.Telegraph* 27 June 1986.

Reviews

MODERN MYSTERIES OF BRITAIN:
One hundred years of strange events

by Janet and Colin Bord.

Grafton Books, London. 1987, hb £14.95, pp336, gazeteer, chronology, bib, index, notes, photos, illus.

This overview of contemporary British forteana is the natural outcome of the Bord's encyclopedic interests in such topics. For some years now there has been a need for a good general survey which incorporates the new cases, discussions, theories and hypotheses, and especially new evidence and its interpretation, to supercede or complement earlier attempts. This should do nicely for a while.

Almost every familiar fortean topic is represented here, both the classic forms (such as 'spontaneous human combustion'; falling material; UFOs; water monsters; stoned toads; ghosts; mystery cats; puzzling disappearances; and ball lightning, etc) to the largely unclassifiable absurdities (such as bombardments with food; meaningful associations of names, places and phenomena; encounters with Little People, mermaids, 'aliens' and hitch-hikers; phantom animals, houses and vehicles; etc). Like Fort, the Bords have defined their period - in this case the 100 years up to 1985 - and manage to pack their 25 subject headings with a great deal of factual material, which is (as we have come to expect from them) well referenced. Another trademark of the Bords' is the extensive gazeteer and chronological listing of data, which takes up the last third of the book.

The Bord's entrench their position as benign sceptics, demonstrating the balanced fortean approach to the phenomenal world, neither accepting nor rejecting evidence without reservarions. The style, structure and content of this book represents what the Bords do best - few contemporary forteans have their range of experience, both in the field and in the library - and their fortean balance is impeccable. With such a splendid effort it seems ungracious to point out a deficiency; only fleetingly are we treated to what the Bords themselves make of all this, and I plead for more 'interpretation' by them as they work towards their *magnum opus*.

In the meantime this survey is heartily recommended. I can think of no better introduction to today's mysteries for the interested newcomer to our chosen studies, both as a guide to the phenomena, the literature and to the opinions of the investigators. The established fortean will enjoy the book precisely *because* it raises more difficult questions than provides easy answers. It would make an ideal addition to a school library, and I'd like to see it selected for study, perhaps in the sixth form or earlier.

Bob Rickard

THE NIGHT BATTLES:
Witchcraft and agrarian cults in the 16th and 17th centuries

by Carlo Ginsberg.

RKP, London. 1984, hb £9.95, pp209, index, notes.

Carlo Ginsberg's pioneering study - now available in English - is far more than another dry academic tome on witchcraft. He belongs to the *'annales '* school - historians who specialize in getting inside the heads of their subjects - and his researches into the exceptionally rich ecclesiastical archives of northern Italy have yielded fascinating insights into the reality of early-modern witchcraft.

Ginzburg's subjects are the *benandanti* - 'anti-witches' who entered the same dreamlike 'trance' state (?) as the witches themselves and then travelled to the four great yearly sabbats to do battle in the name of Christ.

The church authorities became aware of the *benandanti*'s existence in 1575 and plainly found it difficult to know what to make of them. Ginzburg chronicles the gradual transition from worried acceptance to outright denunciation, and shows how - through trial and torture - the interrogators and even *benandanti* themselves came to believe that they were no more than witches in another guise.

The specialvalue of the evidence given by these anti-witches is this: because they regarded themselves as Christian warriors, the *benandanti* at first talked openly to their inquisitors. Their tales of the 'night battles' they fought are the best possible evidence that witchcraft did actually exist (at least in the sense of being a belief system), and that witches were not simply hysterics driven to 'confession' by brutal torture. And as the *benandanti* themselves made clear, witch and anti-witch alike sprang from fertility cults that were almost in the Murrayite mould. Ginzburg is however quick to point out that his research bears out only this part of

Margaret Murray's theory; there is still no evidence that witches actually met in physical form to celebrate pagan sabbats. *[See Mike Dash's article ACCIDENTAL DEATH on p44 for more comments on Dr Murray's interpretation of the Old Religion - Ed.]*

Similarly there are dangers in attempting to take this temporally and regionally specialized study and impose it on a wider chronological and geographical scale.

The book is well-translated, fully supported by the usual scholarly apparatus, and reads easily. Along the way there are many points of fortean interest: in particular the author's observations on the degree to which the inquisitors (read 'researchers') can persuade their subjects to say what they want to hear should be considered by anyone thinking of conducting an interview or hypnotic regression.

Mike Dash

APPARITIONS OF OUR LADY OF MEDJUGORGE 1981-1983

by Svetozar Kraljevic.
Franciscan Herald Press, 1434 West 51st St, Chicago, IL 60609, USA. 1984; pb $9.50 + $1.00 (US funds only), pp202, photos, maps.

IS THE VIRGIN MARY APPEARING AT MEDJUGORJE?

by Rene Laurentin and L. Rupcic
Fowler-Wright Books, Leominster, Herefordshire. 1984, pb £6.95, pp170, photos, map, bib.

The BVM apparitions at Medjugorge, near Citluk in Yugoslavia, are the longest-running of modern visions, and in many ways the most interesting. They began in 1981 and showed no sign of coming to an end when these books appeared in 1984. Since then there has been a revival of interest and reports have settled into a regular, almost mundane pattern. Indeed something approaching boredom appears to have set in: the Virgin is said to have appeared nightly since 24 June 1981. Compare this with the 18 visitations reported by Bernadette at Lourdes, or the single encounter at Pontmain.

In these books forteans have the tools to make their own adequately detailed study. Both are reasonably sceptical presentations of the evidence written by local churchmen; Kraljevic serves at the neighbouring parish of Ljubuski, and Rupcic is a noted Yoguslav scholar. Both quote extensively from interviews with the principal witnesses and present the relevant documents where they are available. Unfortunately the detailed multi-volume report made to the Vatican is closed to the general public.

Thanks to the Church's traditionally cautious response to Marian apparitions both studies are more critical than one might expect. Nevertheless, the intriguing political and nationalistic tensions which underly the case are - understandably - barely explored. The Communist authorities have reacted with a combination of hostility and (one imagines, feigned) indifference. The police have chased the child principals and discouraged pilgrims, while several of the more vocal priests who supported the witnesses have been imprisoned for subversion. It is tempting, if unprofitable, to speculate on just how far this persecution has actually *promoted* the case and encouraged its longevity.

Similarly, reports that the apparitions are being used by the Roman Catholic Croatian nationalists are dismissed as unproven. Disputes between the Franciscan order - which supports the children -and the more hostile secular clergy, led by the local bishop, are completely ignored, although they were central to the thrust of a BBC TV documentary on Medjugorge (screened late last year).

All this should not obscure the typicality of this case. Readers can refer to FT's previous coverage [**FT36** p21, **FT38** pp20-22, **FT42** p26] for details - suffice it to say that most traditional BVM motifs crop up. The witnesses are young Roman Catholic children from a rural background; they seem well aware of the traditional Marian visions. (Some may wish to ponder the parish priest's remark that all are of average or below-average intelligence, and note that the brightest of the group was also the first to stop seeing the apparition; she still asserts that her story is truthful and accurate.) The BVM herself is not visible to the common-or-garden pilgrims who flock to the site in their millions, although subsidiary phenomena such as a Fatima-style 'dance of the sun' have been reported. She identifies herself in a roundabout way (as the 'Queen of Peace'), calls for the conversion of unbelievers and conveys 'secrets' and vaguely-apocalyptic prophecies to the witnesses.

Superimposed upon this traditional base are a (literally) phenomenal range of other fortean goings-on. Kraljevic reports that two of the children claim to have been "taken up to Heaven" by the Virgin: during this time they "disappeared" for 20 minutes and could not be found despite careful searches. (The Catholic nature of the afterlife revealed to them is also noteworthy: the BVM took them through Heaven - "a region of great life and happiness" - Purgatory and then Hell - "a sea of fire with blackened figures moving about".) In October 1981, a mysterious fire erupted at the spot where the first visitation occurred, burned fiercely for 15 minutes and died down leaving no trace. Rupcic reports a column of light on a nearby hill-top *[See Hilary Evans' letter on p2 for another Catholic association between mystery lights and BVM apparitions - Ed.]* and details various miracle cures.

Both books offer basic psychological insights into the characters of the principal witnesses and both deal with the first week of apparitions in some depth, their coverage tailing off as the incidents became repetitative. Although neither has an index, extensive use of sub-headings makes it easy to find one's way about.

Of the two, Kraljevic offers superior detail and more in the way of direct quotation from witnesses; his book might prove the wiser buy for those who wish to draw their own conclusions. Laurentin and Rupcic have rather more in the way of interpretation and offer a concluding 40-page chapter of criticism; but in the end they, like Kraljevic deliver a guarded judgement in favour of the authenticity of the Medjugorge phenomenon.

Mike Dash

Booklets

■ **AN ENGLISH FIGURE: Two essays on the work of John Michell** by Laurel Schreiber and John Nicholson. The first full-length study of John Michell's work, spanning more than 20 years. Shows John to be much more than a father figure of Earth Mystery studies, and a truly independent thinker doing battle with vulgar Darwinism, metrication and many modern stupidities. In fact, he offers an important contribution to mystical philosophy in the Platonic tradition. *[BM Bozo, London WC1N 3XX. 1987, pb £4.50, small format pp85, bib., illus..]*

■ **TOAD IN THE HOLE: Source material on the entombed toad phenomenon** [Fortean Times Occasional Papers #2] selected and annotated by Bob Skinner. Bob Skinner's labour of love has burgeoned out of his initial inquiries into the forteana entombed in antiquarian literature, and in anticipation of a future book he has compiled this sampler, which serves as a superb introduction to the subject's complexities. Historically, there is a surprising wealth of case material and discussion; Bob has selected a few discussions of cases and theories from the historian Robert Plot and naturalists Andrew Wilson and Philip Gosse, with a selection of cases from the *Annual Register* and other sources. Bob's introductory essay rightly draws attention to the international spread of cases - reflected in 15 well-referenced eyewitness cases - and the historical extent of good accounts, as well as the recurring interest in experimenting with imprisoned toads (which, perhaps significantly, fail to match the feats of their naturally incarcerated cousins). Add the 4 page bibliography and you have a unique reference on the subject. *[FORTEAN TIMES: 96 Mansfield Rd, London NW3 2HX. 1987, £1.50, pp40, bib, notes, illos.]*

■ **CAT FLAPS! Northern mystery cats** by Andy Roberts. A valuable little study, full of useful insights, which gathers together a considerable body of modern accounts of (mostly) black panther-like creatures seen throughout the north of England. Separate chapters are devoted to the main alien big cat (ABCs) flaps - of Harrogate (1985), Rossendale (1984), Nottinghamshire (19760, Thorganby (1976), Skegness (1976) - and many other outbreaks of sightings are discussed along the way. The penultimate chapter compares these sightings with the rich body of folklore about Black Dogs and other phantom animals. The last chapter discusses the possibility of a large unidentified species (whether native or imported), and concludes that this is not unlikely in view of the recent captures of a new kind of wild cat in Moray [see **FT45** p10f]. Altogether a commendable effort. *[Brigantia Books: 84 Elland Rd, Brighouse, West Yorkshire HD6 2QR. 1986, £2.00, pp48, notes & refs, illus.]*

■ **MYSTERY OF THE CIRCLES** compiled by Paul Fuller and Jenny Randles on behalf of BUFORA. An overview of the history, evidence and investigation of flattened circular areas in British cornfields, and anything else which throws a light on ithe phenomenon. Theories are summarized, from the exotic to the mundane, from 'force-fields' to hoaxes, ending with the most plausible, Dr Meaden's whirlwind theory. But as most of those involved are beginning to realize, even that theory does not account for all the observable facts. Very useful to have. *[Available from BUFORA: 30 Vermont Rd, London SE19 3SR. 1986, price unknown, pp28, map, illus.]*

■ **STRANGE BERKSHIRE** edited by Amanda and Chris Cowley, and Alan Cleaver. An entertaining miscellany of curiosa, folklore, legends traditions, and interesting sites in the county. *[Strange Publications: 65 Amersham Rd, High Wycombe, Bucks. 1986, price unknown, pp60, illus.]*

■ **THE COSMIC AXIS** by Nigel Pennick. Astudy of the symbolism of the cosmic axis in the three main pagan traditions of Britain: Wicca, Asatru and Druidism (Bardism), and their manifestation in the traditions of early British and European societies. Absolutely fascinating. *[Runestaff-Old England: 25 Partridge Drive, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8EN. 1987, 2nd edition; £1.20, pp28, refs, illus.]*

■ **LANDSCAPE LINES: Leys and limits in Old England** by Nigel Pennick. An attempt to reconstruct the methods and rationale behind the establishment of the observable relics of a system of alignments and sacred sites in 5th and 6th century Britain, which was, perhaps, a refurbishment of a similar but much older system. *[Runestaff-Old England: 25 Partridge Drive, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8EN. 1987, £1.35, pp24, notes & refs, illus.]*

■ **TRADUIRE DEBUGGING SANS BUG** by Jean-Louis Brodu. An intriguing look at computer foaflore and techno-anxiety about those nasty little critters that the hardware and software people won't tell you about. The 'bug' graphics were created on a Macintosh. Includes 'Russian Roulette' BASIC code (presumably for when you've had enough of debugging!) [Pogonip: BP 195 75665 Paris Cedex 14, France. 1986, price unknown, pp24, notes, illus.]

■ **NOTTINGHAM'S ENIGMATIC HEMLOCK STONE** by R.W. Morrell. This geological curiosity, 31ft high and 70ft around at its widest, has been the focus of local legend and tradition since time immemorial. Bob Morrell, here summarizes the facts and the legendary accretions. *[APRA-NUFOIS: 443 Meadow Lane, Nottingham NG2 3GB. 1986, 50p, pp12, illus.]*

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Due to shortage of space many reviews will be held over to FT49.

Classified Exchanges

FT welcomes an exchange of publications with those of mutual interest. This listing is free to those periodicals, in the interests of mutual furtherance, and represents exchange publications received since the last listing. Our headings are not definitive, but used for convenience only. We use the following symbols: # = issue number; **'Pay'** = to whom cheques etc should be payable; **'O'** = Overseas rate; **'E'** = European rate; **'NFC'** = No foreign currency, pay in funds of country of origin. **Please mention FT when responding to these notices.**

COMPUTER & ARCHIVES

☛ **ANOMALOUS THOUGHTS** - At last a newsletter for collectors of unusual data about collecting unusual data. With Scott Parker's enthusiasm and Ray Nelke's truly heroic efforts at data exchanging, it deserves to succeed and to be supported by every serious fortean researcher. No price yet, but interested write to editor Scott Parker, Anomalous Thoughts, Box 94, Beaumont, TX 77704, USA.

☛ **BLACK CHIP** - A journal of computing for anarchists. 4/yr. £2. Pay: Richard Alexander, 55 Dupont Rd, London SW20 8EH.

☛ **THE COMPUTER UFO NEWSLETTER** - discussion journal forapplications of computers to UFO research and databases. At first mainly European enthusiasts discussion Commodore systems, but expanding its scope as better systems become more widely used. Edited by Maurizio Verga. Appx 6/yr. For journal exchange or equivalent of 15,000 Italian lire. Inquiries to: CUFON: via Matteotti 85, 22072 Cermenate (Como), Italy.

CRYPTOZOOLOGY

☛ **BILK** - A newsletter on water monsters generally, with the emphasis on Europe, from Ulrich Magin, who seems to have his finger on every cryptozoological pulse, before and after the event. Recommended. The title is an acronym for Behemoth (freshwater monsters), Isis (mermaids), Leviathan (sea serpents), and Kraken (giant cephalopods). 6/yr. E:£3. US:$5. Pay: Ulrich Magin: Stuhlbruderhofstr. 4, 6704 Mutterstadt, West Germany.

☛ **CHAMP CHANNELS** - News of the Lake Champlain monster and related information; edited by its energetic investigator, Joseph W. Zarzynski. 4/yr. $8. O:$9. NFC. Lake Champlain Phenomena Investigation: Box 2134, Wilton, NY 12866, USA.

☛ **CREATURE CHRONICLES** - fortean news from Ohio. ?/yr. Inquiries to Ron Schaffner (NEW ADDRESS): Box 44062, Cincinnati, OH 45244, USA.

☛ **CRYPTOZOOLOGY** - official organ of the International Society of Cryptozoology - expedition and field reports, in-depth studies, debates and scholarly theorizing - essential for serious cryptozoologists. 1/yr. Apply to I SC: Box 43070, Tucson, AZ 85733, USA.

☛ **ISC NEWSLETTER** - Cryptozoological news, views and correspondence. Highlights of recent issues have been interviews with Rene Dahinden (Sasquatch) and Arlene Gaal (Ogopogo), survey of 'giant octopus' data, the aquisition of a recently shot Onza (an unclassified type of Mexican puma), and most recently a fair summary of the 'Operation Congo' fiasco and a Yeti update. 4/yr. You get this and *Cryptozoology* (above) when you join the International Society of Cryptozoology: Box 43070, Tucson, AZ 85733, USA. Annual membership is $25.

☛ **NESSLETTER** - The latest news of sightings, expeditions and controversies about Nessie and her cousins from the Ness Information Service. Recommended for keeping in touch. 12/yr. £2.50. O:$9. NIS: Rip Hepple: Huntshieldford, St Johns Chapel, Bishop Aukland, Co Durham DL13 1RQ.

EARTH MYSTERIES

☛ **ARCHAEOASTRONOMY** - Journal of the Center for Archaeoastronomy. Academic studies of cultural and historical evidence of 'native' systems of astronomy. 4/yr. $15. US:$12. CA: University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742, USA.

☛ **CAERDROIA** - This well-illustrated and enthusiastically produced journal, edited by Jeff Saward, pioneers research into and cataloguing the world's mazes and labyrinths, how they were constructed, and the cosmologies they represent. Shows what you can do with scant resources. Apx 4/yr. £3.75. E:£5. O:$12. The Caerdroia Project: 53 Thundersley Grove, Thundersley, Benfleet, Essex SS7 3EB.

☛ **EARTH GIANT** - Formerly 'Picwinnard', journal of the South-West Antiquarian Society, records Wessex antiquities and mysteries, including some good historical forteana admirably collated by its editor Jeremy Harte. #5 celebrates John Aubrey. 4/yr. £3. EG: 35A West St, Abbotsbury, Nr Weymouth, Dorset.

☛ **EARTHLINES** - Welsh Border earth mysteries, with snippets of historical regional forteana. #6 is a joint issue with *Northern Earth Mysteries* (below). 4/yr. £4. O:$10. Earthlines: 7 Brookfield, Stirchley, Telford, Shrops TF3 1EB.

☛ **THE LEY HUNTER** - Still the flagship of earth mysteries and ley research. Celebrated its 100th issue with a retrospective fat issue; and #101 comes with a novel special supplement of interesting artworks. 3 issues + separately edited supplement/yr. £5. E:£7. O:$20(air)$15(surf). TLH (**New address**): Box 5, Brecon, Powys LD3 7LU.

☛ **NORTHERN EARTH MYSTERIES** - Journal of the Northern Earth Mysteries Group. #31 was a joint publication with *Earthlines* (above). 4/yr. £2.50. Pay: Philip Heselton, 170 Victoria Avenue, Hull HU5 3DY.

☛ **PRACTICAL GEOMANCY** - The past, present and future of geomantic practice. 3/yr. Single issue price £1. Practical Geomancy: 142 Pheasant Rise, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8SD.

☛ **STONEHENGE VIEWPOINT** - Each issue is filled with informative and imaginative explorations of every aspect of megalithic culture, and with affection for Isaac Vail's 'Ice Canopy' thesis. 8/yr. $10. O:$15. SV: 2821 De La Vina St, Santa Barbara, CA 93105, USA. UK Agency: c/o 3rd Floor, 35 Gt Russell St, London WC1.

☛ **TOUCHSTONE** - Newsletter for Surrey Earth Mysteries, edited by Jimmy Goddard. Enquiries to: Touchstone: 25 Albert Rd, Addlestone, Weybridge, Surrey.

FOLKLORE

☛ **FOAFTALE NEWS** - A slender but nevertheless interesting newssheet, edited by foaflorist-author Paul Smith. Details unknown. Write to FN: Centre for English Cultural Tradition and Language, University of Sheffield, Sheffield S10 2TN.

☛ **FOLKLORE** - Journal of the Folklore Society; every issue has some erudite material directly or indirectly related to fortean studies, and unusual topics are creeping in, eg. issue 1986-ii has Venetia Newall's fascinating Presidential address to the Society on 'Folklore and Male Homosexuality'. 2/yr. £15/$35. Pay: The Folklore Society: University College, Gower St, London WC1E 6BT.

☛ **FOLKLORE FRONTIERS** - Mapping new frontiers of urban belief tales, tall-stories, and foaf-lore, but including book and magazine reviews on editor Paul Screeton's longstanding interests in forteana, earth mysteries and modern shamanism. #2 has Doc Shiels on 'The blonde in the black dress'; #3, reduced to A5 format, features junkie dogs, new sources of radiation fears, AIDs, Crying Boy curses, and comet anxiety. Great stuff! 4 issues for £3. O: $8 (surf), $12 (air). NFC. Pay: Paul Screeton: 5 Egton Drive, Seaton Carew, Hartlepool, Cleveland TS25 2AT.

FORTEAN (STRICTLY & LOOSELY)

☛ **ANOMALOUS PHENOMENON REVIEW** - organ of Anomalous Phenomenon Research Association. Promising little publication, edited by Robert Morrell and S. Henley. #3:3 has a study of a Scottish cairn site, a Derbyshire polt case, and a sensible review of S.Campbell's recent book on the Loch Ness Monster. ?/yr. £2.52/yr. O: $10. APRA: 443 Meadow Lane, Nottingham NG2 3GB.

☛ **ANOMALY** - ASSAP's Journal of Record. 2/yr. £3.60 (less for ASSAP members - see *ASSAP News* below). Single issues £2. Pay: Alan Cleaver: 65 Amersham Rd, High Wycombe, HP13 5AA.

☛ **ASSAP NEWS** - Newsletter of the Association for the Scientific Study of Anomalous Phenomena. 6/yr. Free to members. Enquiries to Membership Secretary Sue Laws: 130b Southwood Road, New Eltham, London SE9 3QN.

☛ **BULLETIN OF THE TYCHONIAN SOCIETY** - Dedicated to a geocentric cosmology. Free on request, but donations appreciated. New address. BTTS: 4527 Wetzel Ave, Cleveland, OH 44109, USA.

☛ **CLYPEUS** - fortean journal in Italian from the group Clypeus. Enquiries to: Clypeus: Box 604, I-10100 Torino, Italy.

☛ **CRUX** - A vibrant personal commentary on fortean events, loosly connected with editor Tom Adams' two main interests, Texas and cattle mutilations. Much of humour and interest. ?/yr. $5. O:$6. NFC. Pay: Thomas R. Adams: Box 1094, Paris, TX 75460, USA.

☛ **ENERGY UNLIMITED** - Detailed reviews and studies of bizarre, alternative and unorthodox energy devices and motors, with an emphasis upon possible UFO propulsion systems. EU: Box 35637, Sta. D., Albuquerque, NM 87176, USA.

☛ **EXPLORING THE SUPERNATURAL** - Despite its deplorable title, ETS is developing into a sort of English version of *FATE*. It is a commercial newsstand monthly (launched last year) covering a wide range of forteana, featuring many well-known writers and researchers, with much of interest. 12/yr. £15.50/yr. O: on application. ETS: 89 East Hill, Colchester CO1 2QN.

☛ **FATE** - the grandpappy of fortean magazines; founded in 1948 and still as vital and relevant as ever. Its articles are excellent and wide-ranging; its letters and readers' experiences are often gems; its book reviews are always informative; we'd buy it for Curtis Fuller's regular, informed column, which should be mandatory reading for forteans. $15/yr. O:$19. Available on UK newsstands at £1.10 a copy.

☛ **INFO JOURNAL** - One of the handful of essential journals for forteans. Considerable amount of interest in recent issues. $10/yr. International Fortean Organization: Box 367, Arlington, VA 22210, USA.

☛ **KADATH** - A well-produced journal about forgotten civilizations, and their ruins & relics; soundly researched articles, in French. Write to: Kadath, 6 Boulevard St-Michel, B-1150 Bruxelles, Belgium.

☛ **JOURNAL OF BORDERLAND RESEARCH** - Almost legendary organ of the Borderland Sciences Research Foundation, founded by N. Meade Layne in 1945, and continued, between 1959-1985 by Riley Hansard Crabb. It deserves to be a legend for publishing regularly all these years! Covers happenings, speculation and 'sciences' relating to the "borderland between the visible and the invisible", from consciousness and New Physics to UFOs and forteana. 6/yr. $20/yr. Overseas $20 (surf) $30 (air). Pay: Borderland Sciences Research Foundation: Box 549, Vista, CA 92083, USA.

☛ **JOURNAL OF THE FORTEAN RESEARCH CENTRE** - Newsletter of a new venture by Ray W. Boeche operating out of Nebraska, but we've seen nothing since the first (April 1986) issue. Inquiries to FRC: Box 94627, Lincoln, NB 68509, USA.

☛ **JOURNAL OF METEOROLOGY** - Frequently has items of fortean meteorology. 12/yr. Has a variety of sub rates from £12.00. J.Met: 54 Frome Rd, Bradford-on-Avon, Wilts BA15 1LD.

☛ **JOURNAL OF VAMPIROLOGY** - Editor John L. Vellutini, who writes most of the material, is developing a fine exposition, covering every aspect of historical, criminal, mythological, pathological and psychopathological vampirism. #2:4 contains a study of stigmata and blood-flows +'Jung and Irish vampires'. # 3:1 reprints some rare historical sources. 6/yr. $10. NFC. JOV: Box 881631, San Francisco, CA 94188, USA.

☛ **NEWSLETTER** - Informal, participation newsletter on many topics of fortean and allied interests. 4/yr. £1 each. Pay: Sid Birchby: 40 Parrs Wood Ave, Didsbury, Manchester M20 0ND. [NB: address given previously was erroneous - sorry Sid!]

☛ **PASU DATA EXCHANGE** - Newsletter of the Pennsylvania Association for the Study of the Unexplained, edited by veteran investigator Stan Gordon. Current topics: the Eastern cougar, UFO reports. Mainly for exchange. Contact PASU: 6 Oakhill Ave, Greensburg, PA 15601, USA.

☛ **PURSUIT** - The journal of the Society for the Investigation of the Unexplained, and essential reading for informed forteans. Every issue is packed with good things. 4/yr. Memb:$12. O.rates on application. SITU: Box 265, Little Silver, NJ 07739, USA.

☛ **SCIENCE QUEST** - informal news and chronicle of the investigations into scientific anomalies by the Science Frontiers SIG, co-ordinated by Gerald Baker. 6/yr. £4/$8. SF: 2119 College St, Cedar Falls, IA 50613, USA.

☛ **THE SEARCHER** - Journal of the Society for the Research and Investigation of Phenomena, of Malta,

edited by Ivan Sant. 6/yr. Inquiries to: SRIP: Box 318, Valetta, Malta.

☛ **SKEPTICAL INQUIRER** - the organ of the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal. I know many readers consider the CSICOPs to be 'an enemy' of FAIR enquiry, but their material is well-written, well-produced, and of consistent variety and interest. Of course it's meant to be provocative! In many cases their criticisms are valid, others are open to dispute. Speaking as a fortean, it is better to know the hound at our backs. 4/yr. $18.00. Overseas: add $3.50 (surf), $8 (air). US funds only. SI: Box229, Buffalo, NY 14215, USA.

PSI & PSYCHOLOGY

☛ **AASC NEWSLETTER** - organ of the Association for the Anthropological Study of Consciousness. Variety of topics, including multiple-personality, shamanism, 'past-life regression', deprogramming, Psi-related processes, altered states, healing, symbolic studies of myth. 4/yr. $20.): $24. AASC Treasurer Priscilla Lee: Box 4032, Irvine, CA 92716, USA.

☛ **ARCHAEUS** - fat. packed annual of the Archaeus Project, an intelligent and energetic inquest on all aspects of PSI, parapsychology and related anomalous phenomena - edited by Dennis Stillings. Range of memberships from $20 upwards. O:$22 (surf). Archaeus Project: 629 Twelfth St, Minneapolis, MN 55414, USA.

☛ **ARTIFEX** - newsletter of the Archaeus Project - see *Archaeus* above.

☛ **INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF PSYCHOSOMATICS** - organ of the International Psychosomatics Institute. 4/yr. Membership: apply to IPI, Membership Committee: Box 1296, Philadelphia, PA 19105, USA.

☛ **JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH** - respected organ of the SPR; its long articles are in the forefront of academic research and debate; its book reviews are valuable perspectives. 3/yr. Membership: £13/$34. SPR: 1 Adam & Eve Mews, London W8 6UG.

☛ **LA FONTAINE ROMAINE** - organ of the Association Suisse Romande de Parapsychologie; in French. ?/yr. ASRP: case postale 3, 1001 Lausanne, Switzerland.

☛ **METAPSYCHOLOGY** - "the Journal of Discarnate Intelligence". 4/yr. $20. Inquiries to: Metapsychology: Box 30022, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA.

☛ **NEW FRONTIERS CENTER NEWSLETTER** - News and views from Walter Uphoff and friends, pioneers of psychokinetic research in the States. ?/yr. $25. NFC: Fellowship Farm, Rt 1, Oregon, WI 53575, USA.

UFOLOGY

☛ **AMSKAYA** - newsletter of the STAR Fellowship - dedicated to peaceful contact with friendly aliens. Inquiries to Philip Heselton, 170 Victoria Ave, Hull HU5 3DY.

☛ **BUFORA BULLETIN** - organ of the British UFO Research Association. 4/yr. Memb: £12.50. BUFORA Membership Sec: Pam Kennedy, 30 Vermont Rd, London SE19 3SR.

☛ **BARTH** - entertaining magazine of 'paganism, ufology, mysticism, etc' edited in the kind of over-enthusiastic fanzine-style that you either hate or enjoy, by Paul Bennet. We think 'Barmy Bennett' is one to watch! Much of interest in recent issues on cup and ring marks. 6/yr. £4. Sample for 60p + stamps. Earth: 61 Ranelagh Ave, Ravenscliffe, Bradford BD10 0HF.

☛ **JOURNAL FUR UFO-FORSCHUNG** - articles, cases, reviews - in German. Organ of Gesellschaft zur Erforschung des UFO-Phanomens (GEP). Inquiries to: JFUF: postfach 2361, D-5880 Ludenscheid 1, West Germany.

☛ **JOURNAL OF TRANSIENT AERIAL PHENOMENA** - 2/yr. Free to BUFORA members, and for exchange. see 'BUFORA Bulletin' above.

☛ **FLYING SAUCER REVIEW** - Still essential reading for ufologists after 30 years on the front line! 6/yr. (Single copy price in square brackets) UK & EEC: £12. [£2.50.] Western Hemisphere: US$25 [$5.] All other countries: £15. [£3.] FSR Publications Ltd: Snodland, Kent ME6 5HJ.

☛ **INTERNATIONAL UFO REPORTER** - organ of the J Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies, edited by Jerome Clark. Articles, case studies. 6/yr. Membership enquiries: IUR/CUFOS: 1955 John's Drive, Glenview, IL 60025-1615, USA.

☛ **MAGONIA** - The flagship of Post-Modernist ufology - debates the ufology, folklore, anthropology, sociology interface. Now in word-processed A4 size. 4/yr. £2.50. US:$5. (surf). O:£3.00. Pay: John Rimmer (**New address**): John Dee Cottage, 5 James Terrace, Mortlake Churchyard, London SW14 8HB.

☛ **MUFON UFO JOURNAL** - organ of the Mutual UFO Network - a model of regularity, sanity, and increasingly valuable for those outside the USA who need to keep in touch despite the decreasing number of authoritative US UFO journals, edited by Dennis Stacy. 12/yr. $25. O:$30 (US funds only). MUFON: 103 Oldtowne Rd, Seguin, TX 78155-4099, USA.

☛ **NONSIAMOSOLI** - UFOs and ET contacts with apocalyptic overtones - in Italian. Inquiries to: Nonsiamosoli: via Asti 23, 63018 Porto Sant'Elpidio, (Ascoli Piceno), Italy.

☛ **NORTHERN UFO NEWS** - News & investigations from the north of England, including a ufological commentary by editor Jenny Randles. We find it a useful overview of British ufology. 6/yr. £5.40. Pay: NUFON: 8 Whitethroat Walk, Birchwood, Warrington, Cheshire WA3 6PQ.

☛ **NUFOIS NEWS** - organ of the National UFO Investigation Society, published by the same team that puts out APRA (see under FORTEAN above) - very slight for an allegedly 'national' 'newspaper' (their words). Inquiries to: NUFOIS: 443 Meadow Lane, Nottingham NG2 3GB.

☛ **QUEST: THE JOURNAL OF UFO INVESTIGATION** - organ of the Yorkshire UFO Society (YUFOS) - news, investigations, articles - vigorous example of the new breed of British UFO journals. 6/yr. £6. E:£8. O:$15. Pay: YUFOS: 106 Lady Ann Rd, Soothill, Batley, W.Yorks WF17 0PY.

☛ **UFO** - organ of the newly formed Centro Italiano Studi Ufologici (CISU) - in Italian. Inquiries to CISU: Corso Vittorio Emanuele 108, I-10121 Torino, Italy.

☛ **UFO BELGIUM** - Belgian/Dutch UFO magazine (formerly *UFO 21*). Inquiries to Marc Broux, Koning Albertstraat 40, 3500 Hasselt, Belgium.

☛ **UFO BRIGANTIA** - journal of the West Yorkshire UFO Research Group (WYUFORG), edited by Andy Roberts. Local cases, columns, and good articles. 6/yr. £5.50. O: on application. WYUFORG: 19 Bellmount Gardens, Bramley, Leeds, W.Yorks.

☛ **UFOLOGIA** - supplement to *Clypeus* - in Italian.

Inquiries to: Clypeus: Casella Postale 604, 10100 Torino, Italy.

☛ **UFO NEWSCLIPPING SERVICE** - Monthly collections of clippings from all over the world, with several pages of forteana too. 12/yr. Apply for rates. UFONS: Route 1, Box 200, Plumerville, AK 72127, USA.

☛ **UFO NEWS FLASH** - Italian news and sightings in English. ?/yr. Details from: Massimo Greco: Box 29, I-25121 Brescia, Italy.

☛ **UFO PHENOMENA** - Articles. Reviews. Indexed. A serious review and paper journal for scientific ufology. Enquiries to UPIAR: Box 11221, I-201110 Milano, Italy.

☛ **UFO RESEARCH AUSTRALIA NEWSLETTER** - Essential for keeping informed on Australian research and cases. 6/yr. A$15. O:A$18(surf)/A$30(air). NFC. UFORAN: Box 229, Prospect, SA 5082, Australia.

OTHERS (LAST BUT NOT LEAST)

☛ **ANIMA** - a magazine of 'myth, ritual, symbolism and animistic magick' - incorporating *Avalon* - very interesting. 4/yr. £4. O:$8 (surf) $12 (air. Pay: Anima: 8 King St, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 9JY.

☛ **CHAOS** - a magazine for "chaos magicians, anarchists, iconoclasts, situationists, ufologists, illuminati, bedsit philosophers, paranoids etc etc". 4/yr. £5. Pay: Joel Biroco: BCM Utopia, London WC1N 3XX.

☛ **CRITIQUE** - 'A journal of conspiracies & metaphysics'. Book size and thickness; much of interest. 4/yr. $14. O:$21 (air). Critique c/o Bob Banner, PO Box 11451, Santa Rosa, CA 95406, USA. Sample (150pp) $6, $9 (air).

☛ THE **GATE**- 'covers a wide range of paranormal occurrences'. 4/yr. $1/per copy. Pay: Beth Robbins: Box 43518, Richmond Heights, OH 44143, USA.

☛ **LLEWELLYN'S NEW TIMES** - basicly a publisher'd catalogue of "astrology and New Age books" augmented by extracts and articles. Inquiries to: Llewellyn Publications: Box 64383-864, St Paul, MN 55164-0383, USA.

☛ **MAGGIE'S FARM** - Australia's alternative network magazine; with some coverage of occultism & PSI research, and Abo resistence to the erosion of their beliefs and sacred sites. Inquiries to MF: Box 29, Bellingen, NSW 2454, Australia.

☛ **THE NETWORK NEWS** - newsletter of the Runaway Suicide Prevention Network, paying attention to some of the causes of youth suicides, copycat suicides, and suicide clusters. Inquiries to NN: Human Services Development Institute, University of Southern Maine, 96 Falmouth St, Portland, ME 04103, USA.

☛ **NNIDNID** - A surrealist magazine of art, poetry, prose and other forms, heavily laced with editor Doc Shiels' fortean leanings. 3/yr. £6. USA:$15. Euro-pean rates available. Collectors' specials available - inquire. Pay: MCF Shiels: NNIDNID, 3 Vale View, Ponasnooth, Truro, Cornwall.

☛ **THE REFERENDUM NEWS AND COUNTER-BRAINWASHING GAZETTE** - "the only magazine of its kind...that tells ya who is brainwashing whom and why...for connoisseurs of brainwashing"!!! Inquiries to Harold W. Briggs: 106 Wellington Road North, Hounslow, Middx TW4 7AA.

☛ **SHAVERTRON** - "the only source of post-Deluge Shaverania". 3/yr. $10. O:$11 (surf) $13 (air). Pay: Richard Toronto: Box248, Vallejo, CA 94590, USA.

☛ **THE STARK FIST OF REMOVAL** - Indescribable lunacy from the cult of hi-jinks and zero gravity. Send whatever you like to: The Church of The SubGenius: Box 140306, Dallas, TX 75214, USA.

☛ **WHOLE EARTH REVIEW** - Continuation of the CoEvolution Quarterly and the Whole Earth Software Catalog. A broad-based wised-up New Age review of tools and ideas for the Computer Age. Essential to keep up with the times and techniques. 6/yr. $18. O:$22(surf)/$34(air). WER: Box 27956, San Diego, CA 92128, USA.

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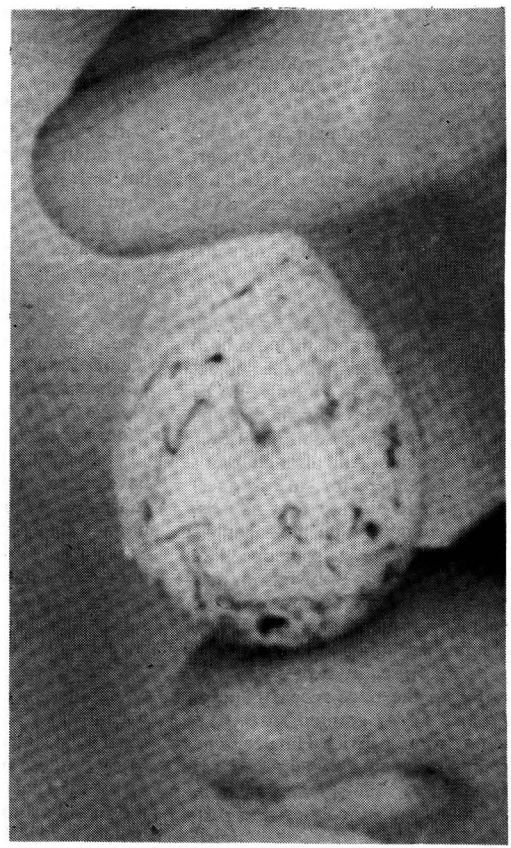
NUMBERED EGG



A yellowhammer's egg bearing the number 708 (or 804 upsidedown), given to Stephen Collins of Pendeford, Wolverhampton, by his grandfather, who had found it in a nest with other eggs. [© Wolverhampton *Express & Star* 24 April 1982.]

confessor, this was *"dificil de comprender"*; but as researcher Salvador Freixedo has pointed out in his in-depth study of the case - *Las apariciones de El Escorial* (Quinta, Madrid, 1985) - it is easy enough to understand for anyone familiar with UFO-mythology, in which celestial rescue-ships, frequently accompanied by blue light, are a standard feature.

Hilary Evans
London.

FT BLASTED!

Excellent! Excellent! You gentlemen continually outdo yourselves with the production of *Fortean Times*. My eyes skip not a page.

A direct comment, if I might, regarding your response to Robert Beach and his question about top secret explosives [Letters, **FT45** p3]. I know you meant your reply in jest, but unfortunately the spirit of free inquiry is as delicate as angel hair and as easily crushed. I don't know who Mr Beach is - he may be new to Forteana and still looks both ways when he mentions the subject to friends fearing ridicule. If he takes the answer the wrong way he may just silence himself and never question again. And after all, that's what we're here for; to ask questions. There are too few, as it is, brave enough to question openly.

Who knows, someone like Tom Bearden or Bob Nelson, or a reader in a far-flung corner of the galaxy, just might dust off a brittle clipping dealing with the very subject of top-secret explosives. For instance: the most recent issue of *Physics Today* granted space to a letter from an Erich Hutzler, who claimed to have heard Barry Goldwater, the Senator from Arizona, say on a television program that America used a (third) atom bomb, in Vietnam. This may not have been an atom bomb, maybe it was what Mr Beach is inquiring about.

He might also have been inquiring about the Tunguska blast. Or the big mushroom cloud off Japan, Tesla's weapons, Bearden's beam weapons, or anything of that sort. We should be one big happy family of inquisitors and iconoclasts...a family that welcomes all curiosities and tastes of peculiar nature.

Scott Parker
Beaumont, Texas.

WITHOUT A BRAIN

Last issue you refer briefly to an anencephalic infant surviving for at least five months [**FT47** p14], and recall a previous item [**FT38** p30] on surviving adults with "no detectable brains". This latter reference takes up about half a column and describes a Swedish TV documentary, shown on ITV in 1982, in which Professor John Lorber introduced several children and adults of normal intelligence but with large cavities in the area normally occupied by cortical tissue.

Cases like these are sometimes classified as *hydrancephaly*, and deserve much more detailed attention than they have received to date. Unfortunately the data upon them is buried in specialist medical journals, such as the *Journal of Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology*.

The only popular account I have been able to find is by journalist Anthony Smith, in his book *The Mind* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1984). The more widely known condition of hydrocephalus is caused by an excess of cerebrospinal fluid in the cerebral/spinal cord system, causing increases in the size of the ventricular cavities within the skull. This condition was usually fatal, but improved postnatal surgical techniques now allow many of these infants to survive to maturity. The assumption was that the build-up of fluid had been halted, but CAT scanners have now begun to uncover cases of normal adults in which cortical material is either absent - to the limits of the resolution of the apparatus - or restricted to a smear of brain a few hundredths of an inch thick around the inside of the skull, the remainder of the head being filled with fluid. Hence the neologism 'hydrancephaly' ('water and no brain').

Actually cases of this kind have been turning up at autopsies for years, and reported in the appropriate medical journals, but have been disregarded, perhaps because they are so destructive of established beliefs about the relationship between consciousness and the human brain. The group at Sheffield University has, however, now built up a great deal of data from case studies of 253 hydrocephalics and hydrancephalics. Although the reduction in the normal quantity of brain tissue in these individuals ranges from a few per cent to 95% or more, there seems to be no correlation between the amount of residual tissue and IQ. The subject named Roger, referred to in the TV documentary, who has no more than 5% of the normal amount of brain tissue and a Fisrt Class degree in Mathematics, has an IQ of 126.

Perhaps some reader of **FT** with access to the specialist medical literature will take up the task of ferreting out more information on hydrancephalics - including developments since 1984 - and present it to a wider audience.

Mike Costello
Nottingham.

LOBSTER OMEN

After my letter describing the mysterious appearance of a frog in a jar appeared in the last issue [**FT47** p75], I mailed a copy of it to a correspondent of mine in California. I was surprised and delighted to receive in response a letter from my friend's wife, Maribeth, detailing a couple of interesting experiences of her own. Whether they are unexplained phenomena I don't know, but here is the text of her letter:

Dear David, Yes I did enjoy reading your story about the frog in the jar. It brought to mind a couple of strange incidents that I have experienced! One involves finding some snails in my daughter's aquarium about 1½ years ago. We puzzled over how they came to be there - they were just there one day!

There were only 2 or 3 of them as I remember and they were pea-sized and eventually I think they died off or we may have lost one or two of them when cleaning the aquarium. At any rate, they weren't with us for very long - a few weeks, I think.

The other incident happened to me about 3-4 years ago when I was living in the foothills of Ojai, California. I got in my car one day and began driving down the hill into town when a movement on the floor of the passenger side caught my eye. When I looked I saw it was a small lobster (or what looked like a lobster to me!), about 3 inches long, crawling around! As you might imagine, I nearly drove into a tree, and I think it was several hours before my skin stopped crawling. We had to share space with all kinds of 'critters' up on that hill, but lobsters were not known to be among them. I thought I remembered that I had gone to the beach a few days before, and it was quite possible that someone threw this creature in my open car as a prank. But when I realized I had been driving around all that time, and **at night**, *I had to conclude that regardless of how he got there, this incident was a message from my unconscious. It looked like the crustaccan on the Tarot card of 'The Moon'. It did change my views on a few things I was doing and contemplating at the time.*

In any event, there it is. I wrote back and inquired as to the fate of the lobster. My friend told me that Maribeth put it in a jar, with holes in the lid, in the back yard, intending to take it to the sea, but the lobster died before she could. He emphasiezed that the lobster was seen by others as well.

David Fideler
Grand Rapids, Michigan.

DORSET HOLE FOLLOW-UP

In **FT44** (p8), Bob Rickard tells a story of a moving field in Blackmore Vale, which he commends "to the curiosity of Dorset forteans".

My curiosity got me as far as the Dorset Record Office, where document D148/38/8 - an estate map dated 1723 - shows 'The Ground which moved in the Year 1585, January 30th,' and 'The hole from whence it moved. Here is now a lime kiln.'

The land slipped downhill from the parish of Minterne Magna, across the road linking Cerne to the north of the county, and into the south-western corner of Hermitage parish. The site of the landslide is just below High Stoy, one of the highest points in Dorset, where the downland chalk gives way to the clay of the vales. January, we may suppose, had been a wet month, in 1585, and the field slipped. Trees often remain standing when moved in this way. The landslide at Axmouth, at Christmas 1840, carried a whole field of corn with it. This was reaped with great ceremony in August.

Jeremy Harte
Weymouth, Dorset.

CHAMP RESOLUTION

In the article 'Swedish Monster Protected' (**FT47** p10) you referred to legislation to protect 'Champ', Lake Champlain's unidentified water animals. To update your readers, the resolution was also adopted by the New York Senate in 1982, and most recently by the Vermont Senate last year (1986).

Joseph W. Zarzynski
Lake Champlain Phenomena Investigation, Wilton, NY.

[We regret we have no room to print this resolution, as Zarr asked us to do, but we refer interested readers to his informative newsletter Champ Channels*; see our* CLASSIFIED EXCHANGE *for the address.]*

OPERATION CONGO

I wish to thank all forteans who so kindly gave Operation Congo their staunch support. I am sorry we did not find the beastie, but I hope to have another crack in three or four years time - that is, if Roy Mackal does not beat us to it!

Bill Gibbons
London.

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Help!

Free to genuine inquiries. When replying, please mention you saw the item in FT. Thanks!

☎ I am currently engaged in researching for a book/let on the subject of 'foo-fighters'. I have most of the UFO literature refs but you never know... If you have anything relevant, please write to Andy Roberts: 84 Elland Road, Brighouse, West Yorkshire HD6 2QR.

☎ Among worldwide reports of UFOs there have been descriptions of soil samples removed, sometimes from the bottoms of lakes. I would appreciate pointers to any information on the geochemistry of such soil samples and associated data. S. Christopher Early: 4341 Harris Valley Rd, Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

☎ I am interested to buy any material on the Turin Shroud, or related subjects; also copies of THE NEWS / FORTEAN TIMES 1-30. Write to: Karmenu Camilleri, 191 Triq Il Kungress, Ewkaristiku, Mosta, Malta.

☎ I am collecting material on dragons, particularly of the traditional flying/firebreathing type. Any research advice, information, or local lore welcome. Peter Alderson Smith, 54 Lisburne Road, London NW3 2NR.

☎ Language informants wanted - The editor of *Maledicta* is conducting a worldwide survey of contemporary vocabulary of sex, excretions, and offensive exclamations for his uncensored *Dictionary of Regional Anatomical Terms*. Anyone interested in participating will receive a copy of the 24-page *Maledicta Onomastic Questionnaire* containing some 250 questions about regional, humourous, euphemistic and taboo terms for sexual body parts and activities, excretions, types of people, as well as terms of abuse, exclamations of anger, disgust, etc. Informants are needed from every region of North America and especially from all other areas worldwide where English is spoken: Great Britain, South Africa, Australia, Jamaica, Bahamas, etc. We also need informants for Welsh, Afrikaans and all other languages. Please write to Dr. R.Aman (FT): 331 South Greenfield Ave, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53186, USA.

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★FT32 — Canadian blob fall; mystery big cats in USA, UK and Australia; Gateways (pt.2); occult murder; fairy tales come true; child sacrifice; Chinese and Indian Forteana.

★FT33 — The Enfield Poltergeist; mythology of UFO abductions; Gateways (pt.3); mass hysteria at Nottingham; simulacra; coffin stories; giant snakes; Eastern European UFOs; Jeoff Watson's Nessie pix; and Chinese Forteana.

★FT34 — Congo dinosaur hunt; phantom hitch-hikers; lake monster names; interview with Dr Jean Bolen on synchronicity; the Welsh 'puma' and other big cats; beached whales; animal saboteurs; nature follows art; ice falls; inept crimes; Trashkashic records; odd Irish doings; and giant squids.

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★FT39 — Robert Anton Wilson on Synchronicity in *Finnegan's Wake*; SHC survivor Jack Angel; entombed toads; *Gent's Mag* extracts (pt.2); homing wallets; mystery cats; snippers and snatchers; Chinese hair-clipping panics; death tableaux; ice falls; updates; columns, letters and comix.

★FT40 — more *Living Wonders* (rat kings, hibernating birds, winged cats, falls of wheat and tadpoles, dinosaur survival, animal loyalty, long returns, avian abductions, etc); chronology of the Exmoor Beast; *Gent's Mag* extracts (pt.3); name synchronicity; Chessie, Chinese hair clipping panics; End Times Bulletin; ball & bead lightning; snakes & bugs in tummies; unconscious births; Japweed; cornfield holes; ice falls; Vatican-masonic links; Creatures from the Black Lagoon; and lots more in this thick 72-page issue.

★FT41 — our tenth anniversary special issue. 76 pages of articles by the Bords, Christie, Clark, Coleman, Costello, Evans, Fideler, Heuvelmans, Hoffman, Keel, Michell, Moore, Pennick, Persinger, Rickard, Shephard, Shiels, Westrum and X. Art by Emerson and Pokkettz.

★FT42 — another jumbo 76 page issue (now become standard) to include our Strange Days section, a news roundup of the whole spectrum of strangeness. Plus Michael Persinger interview; giant squid hypothesis for lake monsters; a new regular feature gleaned from William Corliss' *Science Frontiers*; Exmoor Beast; fire nanny case; world sightings of the Blessed Virgin; bleeding statues; coffin humour; mermaid controversy; appalling bad luck; and the east London fishfall.

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★FT44 — Thomas Short, 18th cent. portent chronicler; Chinese falls; lycanthropy and ergotism; fairies; UFO hypotheses; spontaneous combustion in objects and humans; earth divot mystery; British mystery big cat survey; African Forteana; Indian wolf boy; a teleporting astrologer; falls of sand, fruit, nuts and fish; plus a general round-up of weirdness in Strange Days.

★FT45 — phantom attackers; stoned on Annie Taylor; *Gent's Mag* extracts (pt.4); the 1913 airship scare; recent feral humans; Forteana from Finland and the USSR; moving statues in Ireland; the giant cat carcases from Scotland; the Japanese mystery mushroom cloud; burial mix-ups; terrible bad luck; stone eater; talking bear; and the usual world survey of enigmas.

★FT46 water monsters of Canada, continental Europe and around the world; mystery of a new Nessie photo plus commentary on some old ones; digital photographic retouching; Chinese folk magic; SHC on TV; a festival of fetishism; swarms; Exmoor Beast; ruined city discoveries; curse of the crying boy; cultish curiosities; historical revisionism; Cromwell's giant porter; and a great deal more.

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by Michel Meurger, with Claude Gagnon.

The 'Tete de cheval' of Blue-Sea Lake.

Sightings of large creatures, unknown to conventional zoology, continue to be reported from innumerable lakes throughout North America. The lake monster, real or imagined, argue the authors, represents the unknown (and therefore fearful) superhuman limits of aquatic life.

The complex of motifs that we simplify in the image of a lake monster are defined in stages. The first half of the book is devoted to the results of a field survey of over 60 North American lakes, mostly in the Canadian province of Quèbec. The phenomenon is analysed from the view of contemporary witnesses (hunters, fishermen, foresters, etc), and then through the encounters of progressively earlier times to the experiences of the pioneering explorers and settlers of New France in the 17th century.

This brings the reader to the world of the native Indians and their own experiences of the autochthonous spirit of waters and storms, worshipped as an enormous demon hybrid of serpent and totem animal (such as salmon, lynx, bison, or alligator). The role of the Great Serpent in Indian legends is diverse: he hibernates behind ancient petroglyph-marked cliffs; he is the Master of all life in the waters, lurking in whirlpools and the fathomless places of dark lakes; he or his daughters can transform into beautiful but deadly beings; he is a gateway to the mysteries of the Otherworld; shamans and warriors dealt with him at their peril.

Central to the book is the interplay between the cultures of the native Indians and of the White invaders, who brought with them - from Scotland, Scandinavia, Central Europe and France - vivid lake monster traditions of their own. The varieties and geographical extent of the monster lakes of the Old World, and their ancient denizens, are also detailed through freshly translated historical records.

The authors do not rule out the existence of a cryptozoological animal - several types are discussed - but they have chosen to explorethe psychodrama of encounters with these terrifying gods of the wild places, and the cultural accommodation of fear and strangeness. Significantly much of the Indian material concerns shamans and the ritual of initiations.

As well as a considerable body of referenced historical material, most of it new to the field of study, the authors bring to the subject a radically different methodology, based upon comparative folklore and analysis of cultural context. They demonstrate the mythologising of real events: such as the effect of the introduction of the horse upon the lake monster mythos throughout the Americas; and the suppression by the Jesuits of the Indian 'lake monster' secret societies, with the inevitable Christianisation of the Great Serpent as a form of Satan. The lake monster, in its many forms, is seen as an element of a mythical landscape: a formal topography for the magical fauna of dreams and myths.

The 'living log' of Lake Saint-François.

LAKE MONSTER TRADITIONS is the first translation of the authors' *Monstres des lacs du Quebec* (Stanke 1982), thoroughly revised with an expanded and updated text and added illustrative material.

ISBN: 1 870021 00 2
244 x 172mm, sewn, paper.
304pp, photos, drawings, illus, maps, index, bib, notes & refs.
Publication: July 1987. £9.95 / $17.00.

LOST LANDS AND SUNKEN CITIES

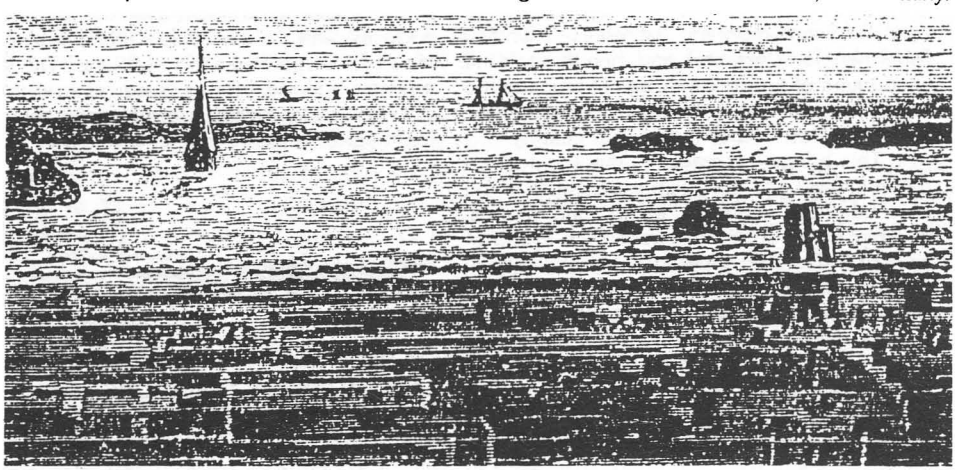
by Nigel Pennick.

All around the coast of Britain are the remains of lands and settlements which have been destroyed by the sea: some by sudden catastrophes, and others by gradual but inexorable erosion.

The roll-call of these lost lands and sunken cities challenges us to reconsider whether the famous lost lands of Lyonesse and *Cantre'r Gwaelod*, for example, existed solely in legend, or whether many such legends are but the remains of once thriving cities and fertile lands long ago swamped beneath the waves. These traditions and the records left to us in obscure documents have been generally ignored by historians, yet, argues Nigel Pennick, they can teach us important lessons in the understanding of historical processes.

Researched over a seven-year period, the book sheds new light on many of the events and locations which feature in British historical geography, and upon famous inundations from the most ancient records up to the present day. For example: when the lost lands are restored to the familiar outlines of the British Isles, the maps of Ptolemy and later cartographers are shown to be far less inaccurate than it is fashionable to claim.

The first chapters put the subject into geological and geo-mythological perspective-including a discussion of the Atlantean catastrophy . The major part of the book discusses local losses and legends by region: the main ones being Cornwall, Wales, Lancashire, Scotland, North-east England, Lincolnshire, East Anglia, Kent and the South coast, and Brittany.



The author's aim is to correct the lamentable ignorance about how the shape of the country has changed within historical times - and this is backed up by extensive use of old maps, drawings, engravings, memoirs, local histories, photographs, and other archival material.

ISBN: 1 870021 01 0
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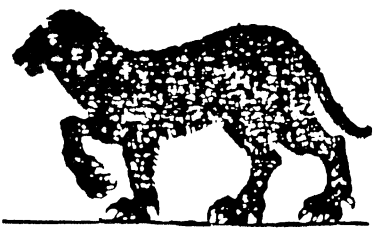

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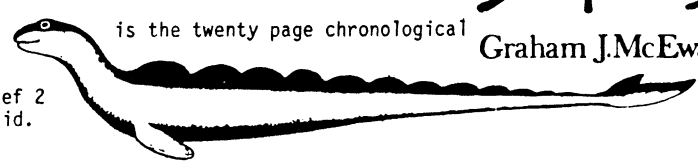

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By Hugh Clayton
Environment Correspondent

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Hilarious big top act turns to tragedy as 200 watch

Circus fat lady mashes dwarf

The Toads That Ate Bakersfield; Only the Cars Could Stop Them

Wall St. Journal 8 May 86

5 More Pelicans Found Mutilated

MOON SHOT BOSS BACK AT NASA

ORDER FOR 124 TORNADOES

By Air Correspondent

March of the alien cannibal frogs

D. Mail 4 June 1986

COLONIES of cannibal frogs are threatening their smaller British cousins.

The South African Clawed Frog, which can weigh more than 1lb., twice the weight of its victims, has invaded tributaries of the River Wye, and other colonies are in East Anglia.

The frogs, which have sharp black claws on the back feet, were originally brought to this country for medical research. Some were released and others escaped. BH

Elephant dies — of sexual harassment!

Express & Star 26 July 86

Frederik, Denmark's shy bull elephant who fled after persistent sexual harassment from seven amorous she-elephants, has died of a heart attack.

The three-ton 16-year-old elephant fell on his side in a shallow lake on Monday while fleeing his female pursuers.

The she-elephants tried in vain to push him upright and finally the nature park had to call in rescue services with a crane to do the job.

But the stress was too much for Frederik and yesterday his heart stopped. The nature park in Givskud is now looking for a more macho male, able to satisfy the demands of its enthusiastic resident females. AS

Cradle to the grave

A NOTICE in the maternity unit of Belfast City hospital warns the staff: "The first five minutes of life are the most dangerous." Underneath someone has written: "And the last five are pretty dicey too."

'Squids' aid study of epilepsy

By Roger Highfield
Technology Correspondent

Nun trips a fugitive, then disappears

DUNG BEETLES 'NOT ANSWER'

Washday chaos by roaming mole

Close encounter of the disgusting kind

Slobs from outer space

FT in £55m dockland move

DINOSAUR UNION IN YOUTH DRIVE

£23 to send telegram to Heaven

Welcome to hunt

SIR.—"What a Wally" I chortled

FT COLLAGE #6. FEB 87 PAUL SIEVEKING

Gutsy gal uses spunk — not eyes — to build her house

Headless Giant Closes Factory

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

MIRACLE BUS TRIPS COLLAPSE

Daily Telegraph Reporter

UFO riddle: Was it a bin bag?

YORK PLANT ACCUSED OF BLACKMAIL

Pet Product Marketing Dec 86

NEGLECTED QUAILS ARE EXPLOSIVE

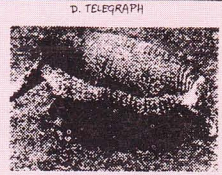
Ghosts' part in vital Portugal elections

Problems not solved by suicide — coroner

Laser gun ends army arguments

SEPTEMBER 12, 1986

D. TELEGRAPH



A giant armadillo

Armadillos aid fight on leprosy

By Dr K. C. Hutchins
Medical Consultant

It was seven feet tall and bullets couldn't stop it:

TERROR OF THE SPACE BEAST

POLICE 'NEED A PSYCHIATRIST'

Pilot tells passengers to get out and push

Scotsman 6 Sept 86

Portsmouth News 20 Aug 86

Lion was an atheist

A BRAZILIAN man lost an arm when he deliberately stuck it into a lion's cage to test God's power. A hospital spokesman said today Mr. Fontes's mother told police she thought he was joking when he said he would offer one of his arms to the lion to test the power of God.

NM

Hot dog bites man

60 years with button up nose...

ELEPHANT FOOT YAM SALES INCREASING

More Britons are developing a taste for exotic delicacies such as elephant foot yam and Egyptian pigeon pea, according to a book out today called "Queer Gear"—the market traders' term for exotic foods

D. Telegraph 3 April 86

El Paso firm starts selling solar system

Her only mistake was being born

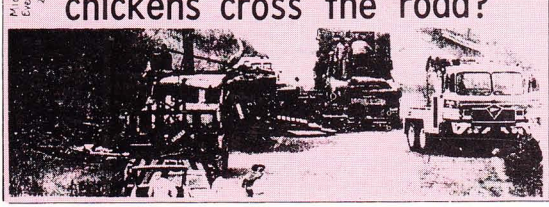
Tiny moth halts £7m road plan

Orders placed for Type 23 equipment

Middlesbrough Evening Gazette 21 April 1986

Why did seven thousand chickens cross the road?

GF



Man who was abducted by starship scientists says...

BUTT-KICKING ALIENS TREATED ME LIKE A LAB RAT!

Weekly World News